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CHALLENGE WINNER MARTIN HOLLAND

Reloved

THE CREATIVE GUIDE TO UPCYCLING YOUR HOME

HOMIE *Sweet* HOMIE

Fill your home
with stylish
upcycled storage
& accessories



Suitcase side
table on p16



Upstyle your windows

How to customise
curtains & blinds

New paint effects

Creating texture ♥
Rustic chippy finish ♥
Mock stone effect ♥



Upholstery masterclass

Discover how to recover
a box chair and footstool!



MIDWEEK MAKES
Ladder bath rack



FURNITURE REVAMP
Kitchen island



HOME REFURBS
Leather label rug



3 WAYS WITH...
Designer stools



RESIDENT EXPERT
Charis Williams







WELCOME!



Upholstery is an essential aspect of upcycling, but it can often be quite daunting. The thought of ripping the worn old fabric off a chair or sofa to give it a new lease of life is exciting and terrifying at the same time. So we've got a solution for you this issue. If you've got a chair or footstool that's in desperate need of attention, but you don't want to get your full tool kit out, why not make a removable cover instead? Not only is this much easier than having to deconstruct the piece of furniture, it also means that you can change your look with the season, your mood, or if you decide to completely redecorate the house. Perfect! Discover how to make the footstool cover on page 32 and recover a chair from page 77.

Also this issue, we welcome a second monthly columnist to *Reloved*. Joining the wonderful Annie Sloan, who caters for all our painting needs, Salvage Sister Charis Williams will be frequenting the pages of *Reloved* to share her DIY pearls of wisdom, introduce us to the world of extreme upcycling projects, and solve all your DIY dilemmas. Check out her first column on page 89.

Don't forget to book your tickets for An Audience With Annie Sloan too! Taking place on Saturday 24th October in the beautiful city of Bath, Annie will be demonstrating techniques, answering your questions and signing books. It's set to be a really lovely afternoon, so find out how you can get your tickets on page 8. I hope you enjoy the issue, see you next month!

SALLY FITZGERALD
Senior Editor



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TO PAGE 38 NOW.

Reloved

WHAT'S IN THE ISSUE...



Learn how to give your battered old favourites a fresh new look



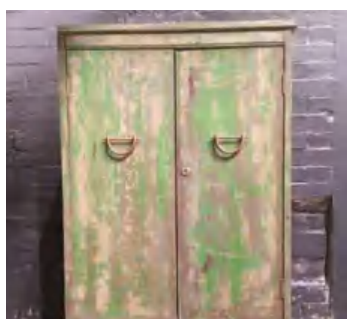
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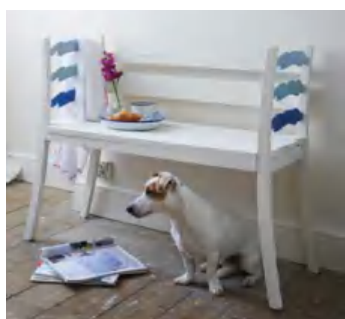
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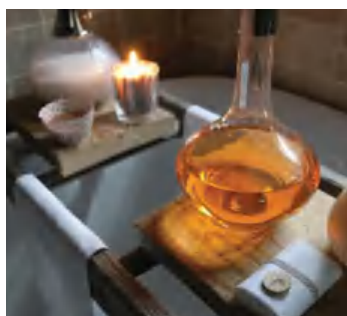
Refresh your home décor with original upcycled pieces



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COMPETITION RULES

By entering a competition you are bound by these rules. Late or incomplete entries will be disqualified. Only one entry per person will be accepted. The company reserves the right to substitute any prize with cash, or a prize of comparable value. Competitions are open to UK residents, except employees of Anthem Publishing and any party involved in the competition or their households. By entering a competition you give permission to use personal information in connection with the competition, for promotional purposes. If you do not want your information to be shared, state 'no offers' on your entry. Receipt of prize is conditional upon complying with the competition rules.

*Calls cost 7 pence per minute plus your phone company's access charge

THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS



♥ **KEITH YOUNGS**
is the founder of Salford's Fitzwarren Street Second Hand Market. He likes

nothing better than travelling around Europe searching out vintage bargains to transform from car boot sales, auction houses and flea markets. On page 24 he meets winner of BBC2's *The Great Interior Design Challenge* Martin Holland.



♥ **AMANDA RUSSELL AND JULIET BAWDEN**
Design duo Amanda Russell and Juliet Bawden, have set up

R&B, www.randbconsultants.co.uk, creating design solutions from start to finish with exciting projects for the home and fashion. This month they upcycle a set of outdoor cushions on page 72 and give an old stool a new look on page 58.



♥ **CHARIS WILLIAMS**
Charis catapulted into the limelight as salvage expert and designer on Kirstie Allsopp's *Fill*

Your House For Free TV show. She loves scouring skips and visiting reclamation yards, then coming up with creative projects using her finds. From this issue she will appear every month in *Reloved* as our resident DIY expert – read her first column on page 89.



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creative Hub

NEWS ♥ EVENTS ♥ PRODUCTS

This is the essential place to come for
endless inspiration from the world
of upcycling – just turn the
page to begin...



Visit Brescia p9



♥ Glamping p8



ANNIE SLOAN READER EVENT

We are so excited to announce our first *Reloved* reader event 'An Audience with Annie Sloan' on Saturday 24th October at 2pm, in the beautiful World Heritage City of Bath. Annie will be hosting and will guide us through a demonstration, answer our burning questions and sign her new book, available to buy at the event. To top it all off, there's tea, coffee and cake! Tickets cost £25 each, (just £20 for *Reloved* subscribers) and there are just 100 tickets available. For details visit relovedevents.eventbrite.co.uk. If you're not local, why not make a weekend of it? For places to stay, visit www.stayinbath.org. See you there!

UNRAVELLED

If you love to knit your own garments, but prefer the idea of re-using vintage yarns rather than new, why not pop over to Ravelry online? It's a huge worldwide community of knitters and crochet-lovers – just type in the words 'unravelers' and you'll discover an inspiring forum dedicated to the thrifty upcycling of pre-loved knitting and crochet fibres of every type. It's easy to sign up and get involved! Visit www.ravelry.com/groups/unravelers



THE GLAMPING SHOW

If you love to get your wellies on and go glamping, then on 24th and 25th September at Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire there's a wealth of exciting exhibitors showcasing the very best this growing outdoors pastime has to offer. From Glamping venues, hot tubs and other accessories to eco-loos, technology and all types of Glamping accommodation. Check out the seminar from Max McMurdo too, who brings his unique creativity to the outdoor living. For more information visit www.theglampingshow.com or you can follow the Show on twitter @theglampingshow

MAKE DO AND MEND-ABLE WEBSITE

We're great fans of Jen Gale's blog My Make Do and Mend Year, and she's just launched the Make Do and Mend-able website – a 'one stop shop' for all things Make Do and Mend. Packed with upcycling, thrifty tutorials and how-tos, you can also find classes and resources near you. There are nationwide listings for workshops (from knitting to spoon carving), re-use and repair events, and pre-loved and ethical supplies. See more at www.makedoandmend-able.co.uk





BLURECO CLOCKS

You'll look at your old newspapers in a new light with Blureco's unique range of super-cool desk and wall clocks. In a restrained palette of colours, which allows the newsprint to become part of the finished look, these timepieces will sit smartly in any contemporary setting. Along with a chic range of jewellery in the minimalist style, this clever company has taken paper recycling to new heights. Visit the Blureco shop at folksy.com/shops/blureco and you'll also be treated to ranges of cufflinks, earrings and jewellery boxes made from newspaper.



OPA BRESCIA

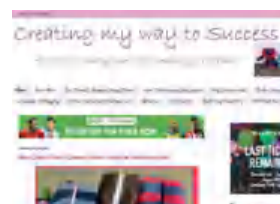
If you're visiting Milan, it's worth taking a detour to Brescia (about half an hour's drive away) to discover OPA. A store in the true vintage flea market style, it has fine Italian glassware and ceramics from the 1930s through to the 1960s and an amazing collection of vinyl. They make their own upcycled furniture, with themed decoupage (think rock albums and cartoons of the '40s and '50s), and breathe new life into reclaimed coffee tables and tailor's dummies by decoratively studding them with bottle tops. You'll find this box of delights at Contrada del Carmine 3, Brescia, or look on Facebook at www.facebook.com/OPA.vintage



♥ CREATING MY WAY TO SUCCESS

jembellish.blogspot.co.uk

Jill Shepherd's blog is packed with so many ideas and practical upcycling projects from bloggers around the world on her fascinating curated blog. Originally from the north of England, Jill's now based in Cairns, Australia and has quite the most positive and productive crafty site we've come across. A single blog post has more than 600 ideas for upcycling your old garments! She has a YouTube channel as well for her DIY tutorials.



♥ BIKELOVIN

bikelovin.blogspot.de

When cycling becomes your life, this is what happens – you want it to be in every part of your life. Unless you're fluent in German, you'll have to rely on the slightly quirky online translation, but thanks to lots and lots of photos, you don't lose the gist of their creative upcycling ideas, mostly involving bits of old bikes, of course. Take a look at the wheel rim raised beds and you'll see exactly what we mean. There are flower beds made out of wheel rims, inner tubes put to a host of uses, plus non-cycling related projects.



♥ RECYCLED CRAFTS

recycledcrafts.craftgossip.com

Grab yourself a coffee and settle down for a browse through this blog – bursting with upcycling and downcycling goodness. They scour the web for the best ideas and latest news for every type of craft you can think of. Click on the Recycled Crafts link and you'll find unique, innovative ways to repurpose your discarded items. There are plenty of ideas for the kids to join in with too. There are giveaways, tutorials to follow, book reviews and much more to keep you busy.



ANNIE SLOAN WALL PAINT

If you're a fan of Annie Sloan's Chalk Paints, hold on to your paintbrushes, as this month sees the launch of her new Wall Paint range. In 10 of the most popular Chalk Paint shades, this hardwearing, water-based paint has a soft-matt finish, durable enough for high traffic areas like hallways and perfect for bathrooms. It costs £39.95 for a 2.5 litre pot, and is available through Annie Sloan stockists throughout the UK. There are even two brand-new paintbrushes to get you the perfect finish. To find your local store, visit www.anniesloan.com



CELTIC SHORE

Taking humble fragments of found sea glass, washed up on the rugged shores near her home in Scotland, Laura creates original pieces of jewellery, incorporating the polished globes into bangles, earrings and necklaces. Her inspired designs showcase the translucent treasures in delicate settings of sterling silverwork. We

MediAlert bracelets, which carry vital personal health info and look absolutely beautiful the same way. To find out more, go to www.CelticShore.com



HEART VINTAGE

Retro meets vintage in a delightful fusion at Heart Vintage, a business that creates wall art and decorative items from abandoned vintage china. Founder and designer Lisa Rushton takes pre-loved finds like china tea sets and upcycles them with a brand-new look. She offers a personalization service if you're looking for a special occasion piece and has created gifts for new babies, weddings and anniversaries, as well as objects to adorn your home. You'll never look at a tea cup in the same way again. Visit www.heartvintage.co.uk

KIRSTIE ALLSOPP'S HANDMADE FAIR

The Handmade Fair 2015 on The Green at Hampton Court Palace is going to be a paradise for crafters, whatever you're into. Taking place from 18th to 20th September, Kirstie Allsopp and her team of expert makers will be there, to inspire you to have a go – whether you've been crafting for years or just starting out. With masses of workshops to choose from, it's all about taking part and being inspired. *Reloved* is holding a photo frame decoupage workshop every day in the upcycling tent, so make sure you book your place – we're looking forward to seeing you there! For details and to book your tickets, go to www.thehandmade-fair.com



THE HANDMADE MOON

Sail away with Handmade Moon's fun range of boats made from driftwood and upcycled vintage fabrics. No two are the same, so they make the most original gifts. Perfect to celebrate the arrival of a new baby, Handmade Moon will personalise the sails with the birth details, to make the cutest keepsake for the nursery. Rebecca, the designer, also creates delightful storage boxes and personalized letter canvasses with her archive of vintage papers, fabrics and found items. Visit folksy.com/shops/TheHandmadeMoon



FURNITURE AND UPHOLSTERY COURSES

Whether you're a beginner or a dab hand at upcycling, the Old School House Club in Lavender Hill, London has a course for you. Run all year round, you can take a class in furniture painting, upholstery, decorative techniques or start right at the very beginning with a course to show you how to spot an upcycling opportunity, your basic tool kit and an introduction to upcycling techniques like stencilling and painting. There's even a crèche from Monday to Thursday mornings, plus tea, coffee and cake. Visit www.theoldschoolclub.co.uk/courses-workshops/home-furniture-upcycling/



TRÈS UPCYCLY

The upcycling movement is gathering momentum across the world, and France is no exception – spreading the word à la Française is UpCycly, a cool initiative raising awareness of upcycling through workshops in schools and local groups. Their hands-on ideas combine waste products like cardboard, plastic bottles and yoghurt pots with simple elements from nature – soil, moss, wool, leaves and branches – to create quirky, but practical objects from planters to outdoor furniture. For more information, visit www.upcycly.com



HANDMADE INTERIORS

By DK PUBLISHING, £20

It's all about fabrics and soft furnishing in DK Publishing's new title, with dozens of projects to help you transform the look of your home. You're taken through the basics of what equipment you'll need and then it's on to basic tutorials in making cushions, curtains, seat covers (see our extract on page 32) and more. The tutorials are all illustrated, step-by-step, and are easy to follow, so this makes a great basic guide. There's plenty of good advice on choosing fabrics and styling your rooms too, plus ideas for projects to do with your children.

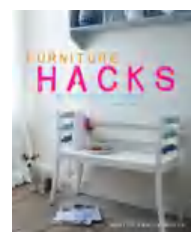


FURNITURE HACKS

By HESTER VAN OVERBEEK

Published by CICO BOOKS, £14.99

Hester has been creating furniture hacks since she moved into a new house and upcycled it from top to bottom, and now she's put all her best hacks together in book form. There are 35 projects in the book, covering everything from beds to curtains and lamps to tables. Most of the projects were made for Hester's own home and you can some of them in this issue of *Reloved* – see pages 18, 68 and 104. We can't get enough of Hester's unique style and *Furniture Hacks* is a must to inspire your own upcycling ideas.

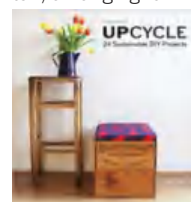


UPCYCLE: 24 SUSTAINABLE DIY PROJECTS

By REBECCA PROCTOR

Published by LAURENCE KING, £18.95

This collection of 24 upcycling projects brings together a host of different international designers and crafters to offer projects that exemplify the upcycling movement at its best. There's a lampshade made from Tetrapak carton, a hanging rail created from copper plumbing pipe and much more, including the wine crate ottoman (page 96) and leather label rug (page 22) featured in this issue of *Reloved*.





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ANNIE SLOAN'S DIARY

SEPTEMBER 2015

How to paint on leather...

Disappointed with a recent leather club chair purchase, this month our columnist, Chalk Paint™ inventor Annie Sloan, decides to get creative with her Chalk Paint to give the bulbous chair an appealing new look.

I bought a club leather chair online. I was so excited about it... And then it arrived. Oh. It was large and the sides were too bulbous and a little out of proportion compared to the back. The leather was dark and a little shiny. It didn't have that nice soft worn look I was after at all. I have a glorious squidgy, elegant-but-beaten-up one at home that my husband adores, so I was looking for something similar. This was nothing like it! It was almost okay, but no, it just didn't quite work. I tried to live with it for a bit. I put a cushion on it and a throw draped over it – and it still wasn't working.

So of course, the answer was to PAINT it! But how? I felt I needed a very different approach to the design solution, but I found I was a little challenged! I was concerned that merely painting it one colour wouldn't change the bulkiness of the chair. I needed a design

and style direction. So I enlisted the help of my son Felix, who is a graphic designer by training and also co-author on my last book *Annie Sloan's Room Recipes for Style and Colour* (published by CICO Books, 2014). He has a good take on a really contemporary look.

We discussed the chair and noticed it had a little of a 1930's Art Deco look about it – the rounded arched shape of the sides indicated this, the low slung look and the small square feet too. But at the same time, it somehow looked very modern.

The design needed to give the piece a more overall shapely look, give it more focus on the back and try to slim down the sides. We did a rough drawing of the chair from the front and from the side and began to work on the design and the colours.

So with Art Deco looks in mind and clean geometric contemporary mid-century design high in our thoughts, Felix began to hone in on lozenge shaped clouds running up the back of the chair. He tried diamond shapes and circles too, but the pointy shapes didn't really work so we ended up with the lozenges finished off with a dot at the top.

The first decision was to make the chair a light colour to try to make it look

soft and less heavy looking – and less like a huge hole in my room! We plumped for pink, as it is almost the antithesis of the dark brown in feel. This immediately changed the scale of the chair and made it more approachable. We felt the inner sides of the chair needed to be another colour too to take away from the bulbous outer shape.

We looked at the pastel aspect of the mid-century colour palette with gentle but slightly clashing colours such as orange with pink, green and lilac. We went for my pale earthy pink, called Antoinette, and paired it with yellow. We tried English Yellow first, but it was too hard next to the soft pink. So we tried Arles and that did the trick. We painted the insides and it immediately made the chair look slimmer. Arles is a soft very warm yellow and is quite close to my Barcelona Orange colour.

We drew the elliptical lozenges in pencil on the back of the chair. We measured to make certain the shapes were in the centre of the chair and the correct distance apart. We drew them by hand and eye, giving them a delightful arty, handcrafted look. If you wanted them really perfect, you would have to draw the shape on graph paper and work it out carefully, then cut it out and draw around the outline. We then found something round to draw around for the dot.

We wanted a contrasting colour for the lozenges and decided on Antibes – a bright green in my colour palette. It's a good fresh colour, but we didn't want to create too strong a contrast against the pale pink, so we added some Pure to lighten the green slightly. We just left the top dot bright like a lovely explanation mark.

The wall behind the chair is painted in Country Grey using my new Wall Paint. I decided to finish the look with a painting I found in a junk shop with pastel edgy colours. I love the soft pastel feel and hope you decide to try something similar!

www.anniesloan.com



Photo © Harriet Matthews



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Suitcase side table

HOME REFURB

Retiring a suitcase that has travelled the world with you can be quite a wrench, so don't throw it away, instead keep the memories close by. Upcycle your suitcase into a side table for a bedroom, office or living room.

Photography © Living4Media / Gallo Images Pty Ltd

MATERIALS

- ☐ **Sturdy old suitcase**
- ☐ **Foldable table with metal legs**
- ☐ **Bolts and nuts**
- ☐ **MDF, or other scrap wood**
- ☐ **Fabric**
- ☐ **Glue**

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ **Screwdriver**
- ☐ **Drill**
- ☐ **Saw**

♥ **STEP ONE** Start by removing the top from the fold-up table. You only need the legs for this project, so save the top to use another time.

♥ **STEP TWO** Place the suitcase upside down on the floor and position the tops of the legs where you'd like them to sit. Mark the bolt holes on the suitcase. If the top of your table legs don't have bolt holes, you'll need to attach the legs to the suitcase with glue. Bear in mind that glue won't be as sturdy as the bolts, so you won't be able to keep as much in the suitcase.

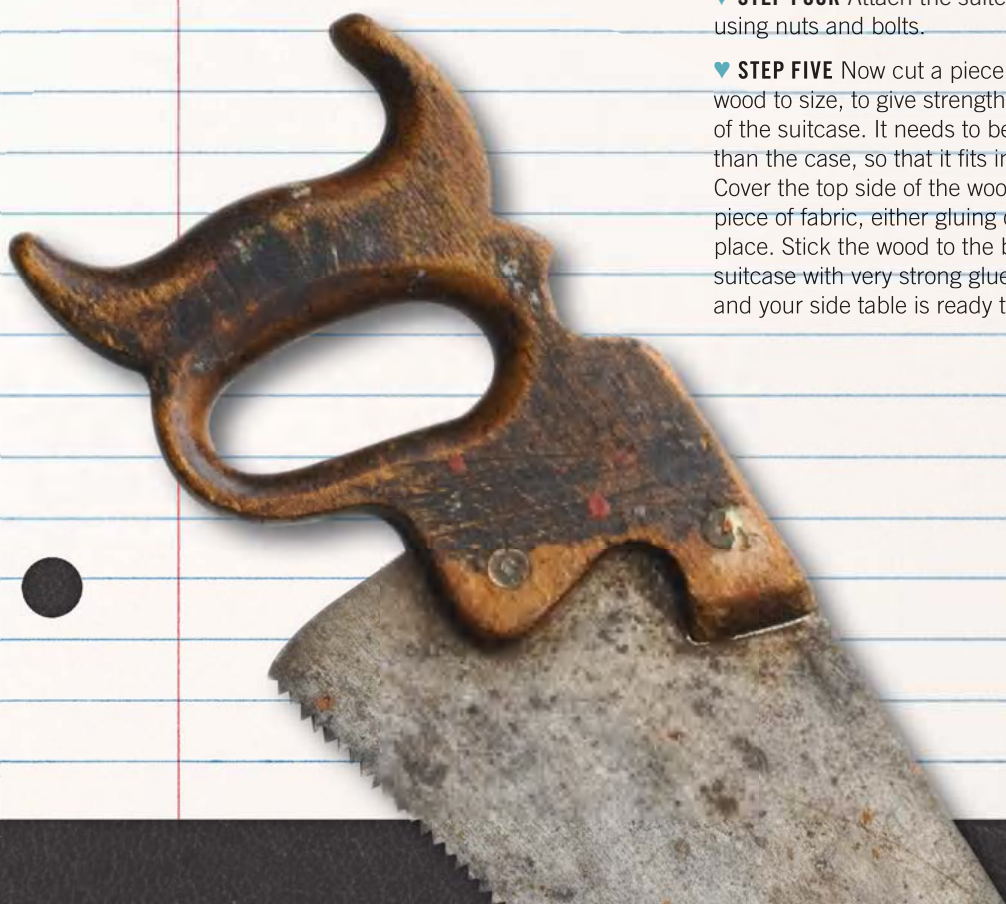
♥ **STEP THREE** Carefully drill four holes in the bottom of the suitcase using the marks you've drawn as a guide.

♥ **STEP FOUR** Attach the suitcase to the legs using nuts and bolts.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Now cut a piece of MDF or scrap wood to size, to give strength to the bottom of the suitcase. It needs to be slightly smaller than the case, so that it fits inside snugly. Cover the top side of the wood in a pretty piece of fabric, either gluing or stapling in place. Stick the wood to the bottom of the suitcase with very strong glue. Leave to dry and your side table is ready to use.

TOP TIP

To add extra interest to the top of the suitcase you could take a selection of postcards, stick them all over the top and then seal them with clear varnish. Alternatively, decoupage the top with a travel poster.







BOOKCASE SIDEBOARD

When your storage needs change, just change your storage – by flipping an upright bookcase on its side and repurposing the shelves!

By Hester van Overbeek

THERE'S PLENTY OF SPACE FOR STORING PAPERWORK AND PROVIDES A GREAT SURFACE FOR DISPLAYING ARTWORKS OR TRINKETS.

BOOKCASE SIDEBORD HOW TO...

MATERIALS

- ☐ Bookcase
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ Spare wood or MDF (medium-density fibreboard)
- ☐ Corner brackets (four per shelf)
- ☐ Screws
- ☐ 4 small wooden table legs, about 8cm tall

☐ Filler

☐ Paint

EQUIPMENT

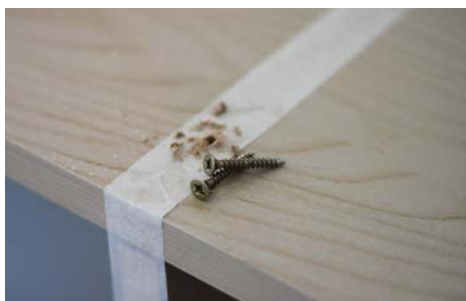
- ☐ Drill
- ☐ Measuring rule
- ☐ Saw
- ☐ Screwdriver
- ☐ Sandpaper
- ☐ Paintbrush

♥ **STEP ONE** Remove the shelves from the bookcase. These probably sit on little metal plugs, which makes removing them easy. One of the middle shelves was screwed in and I decided to leave it there as it was in a good position, but unscrew if you want to change the spacing of your shelves.

♥ **STEP TWO** Turn the bookcase on its side and decide where you want the vertical spacers to go. The spacers are made from the shelves you have removed, as they are already the exact fit. I created three spacers in my sideboard. Also consider where you want to add horizontal shelves and make sure they fit between the spacers. My original bookcase had four shelves. I used three as spacers and one as a shelf. The two additional shelves are made from leftover pieces of MDF.



♥ **STEP THREE** Drill holes for the screws that will hold the vertical spacers in place. I stuck a strip of masking tape to the side of the bookcase to make sure the holes are in a straight line. Drill two holes on each side of the bookcase for each spacer, then screw the spacers in place.



♥ **STEP FOUR** Cut your shelves from leftover wood or MDF. Two of my shelves are the same depth as the bookcase, but I made one central shelf less deep to give the sideboard a more informal look.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Use four corner brackets per shelf to attach your shelves to the spacers. Screw the brackets to the underside of the shelves first, then slot the shelves in place and screw to the spacers.

♥ **STEP SIX** Decide where to place the legs, then drill the holes and attach in place. Make sure you measure and position them accurately, as you don't want your sideboard to wobble.



♥ **STEP SEVEN** Fill any holes from the original bookcase or any new screw holes that are visible with filler. When the filler has dried, smooth it down with sandpaper.

♥ **STEP EIGHT** Paint the sideboard all over, inside and out. I used a soft grey. You will probably need to apply two coats of paint to get an even finish. Allow to dry thoroughly between coats.

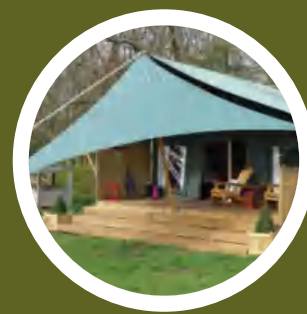
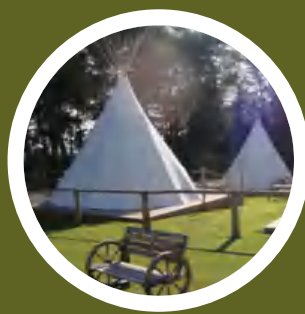
♥ **STEP NINE** Add some accent colours on your sideboard. I gave the legs, little shelf, and the original bookcase base a coat of bright yellow paint (you may need to apply two coats). The bright colour really pops against the grey and makes the sideboard look more modern.



This project is taken from *Furniture Hacks* by Hester van Overbeek, photography by James Gardiner, published by CICO Books. RRP £14.99

TOP TIP

If you already know what you want to store where, measure large items so that the storage spaces in the sideboard will be the perfect size.



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Hunter leather label rug

HOME REFURB

A lifetime of collecting the leather labels off denim jeans will provide the material for stitching up a unique rug, or get a few friends to donate and you'll be able to create this fabulous floor feature in no time at all.

By Joanne Crocker (upcyclestudio.com.au)

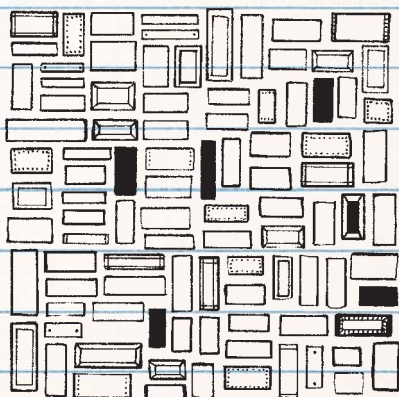
MATERIALS

- ☐ Leather labels reclaimed from jeans, or similar leather pieces
- ☐ Strong yarn – jute or a thick cotton yarn would be fine
- ☐ A piece of industrial felt, cut to desired rug size
- ☐ Fabric glue

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Leather needle
- ☐ Craft knife or sharp scissors
- ☐ Industrial sewing-machine (optional)

♥ **STEP ONE** Lay out the leather labels or cut scraps and arrange them into the desired size and layout for your rug. Feel free to trim them down slightly to create the perfect configuration and ensure each one fits snugly against the next. Take a photo of the layout to refer to once you start constructing the rug.



♥ **STEP TWO** Using a leather needle and a strong, heavy yarn, start from the left-hand corner and stitch the first two labels together. If you're looking for uniformity in the finished result, be careful to ensure your stitches are consistent. The easiest technique is to use straight stitches that are parallel to each other, but you could also experiment with various stitching types for different effects.

♥ **STEP THREE** Continue working left to right, one row at a time, tying off each label as it's finished, until they are all sewn into place.

♥ **STEP FOUR** Cut the felt to size. Lay the rug right side up on the felt, then either trim around the edge with a knife or trace the outline with a pen and cut it out with scissors. This example uses a thin, dense felt to create a firm, stable finish that can stand up to being walked on. The felt layer gives the rug stability, body and cushioning, as well as creating a neat backing.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Apply a thin layer of glue to the felt, covering the entire area as evenly as possible. Lay the leather on the felt and align the edges before pressing the pieces together. Lay some heavy books or similar weights on top to ensure firm and even pressure.

♥ **STEP SIX** The last step is to finish the perimeter of the rug to ensure the two layers stay together under regular foot traffic. The best method is to run an industrial sewing-machine around the entire rug, but if you don't have access to one of these, you could hand stitch the edge with the leather needle used earlier. Create a different look using either blanket stitch or a straight stitch.



This project is featured in *Upcycle: 24 Sustainable DIY Projects* by Rebecca Proctor, published by Laurence King. RRP £18.95





IN CONVERSATION WITH... *Martin Holland*

From working for the Civil Service to starring in the *Great Interior Design Challenge*, Martin's life has changed immeasurably in the last year – Keith Youngs found out more...

Since winning BBC 2's *Great Interior Design Challenge* in 2014, Martin Holland has been a man in demand. Keith Youngs caught up with him recently, to ask him what he has been up to, how life has changed since winning the show and his advice to anyone thinking of, or trying to, break into the world of interior design.

♥ **Your schedule seems so full, what have you been up to?**

The last six months have been pretty hectic to say the least. After the show aired, we had a huge influx of client enquiries, which

have kept us busy ever since. From single rooms through to whole house renovations and all the things in between, it's been a crazy but exciting time. This all came at one of the busiest times of the year for us with our scenery and costume company, which specialises in pantomime. We didn't have time to stop and so ploughed everything we had into following up client enquiries while spending our evenings painting, sewing and loading lorries full of scenery! That took us into the New Year and then, like we didn't have enough on, we were tasked with packing our entire house up and moving in January, as we'd sold over the summer, but hadn't given it much thought during

the madness of the TV show. To say it was exhausting was an understatement, but we took it all in our stride and just kept going.

Then there was our trip to Amsterdam to meet a client. That was a real treat and such an amazing property. The house is a typical Dutch canal house that was once a concert hall. It's the equivalent of Grade 2 listed, so needs careful consideration. With brick floors and lots of beams, there are challenges all over the place, but that's what makes it all the more interesting. We're very excited about being able to work on this project, so watch this space to find out how it turns out.

♥ **Since you won the *Great Interior Design Challenge*, have you found your client base has grown and spread further afield?**

Our business has grown ten-fold since the TV show aired. There's no better tool for advertising than the television and it really has opened up a whole host of opportunities for us. Interestingly, the majority of clients we've been working with since are anywhere but local to us. We seem to have attracted a big following in the south and further up



north, but we only have a small handful of clients in and around Nottingham and the East Midlands, so that's where our next challenge lies, to drum up a bigger clientele locally. I think the key to this will be marketing and linking up with other businesses to maximise our exposure, but the first six months have been all about keeping up with the demand elsewhere.

♥ **What were you up to before the show and how has day-to-day life altered since?**

Before starting the madness that was *GIDC*, I was working in my job as a Contract Manager in the Civil Service and running a scenery and costume hire company with my partner Mark. We'd just finished renovating our house and that had gone on the market, so big changes were afoot, but nothing like what I imagined would happen when I applied to be on the show. It was a crazy 6 months of filming and never quite knowing if the experience was all about to end as I went through each round. After winning, I was suddenly having to deal with such a wide range of clients and some very different projects with very different budgets. It was a whole other ball game compared to dealing with clients on TV, as it's a slightly artificial environment and you have a host of people around you to assist, but then I was out there in this big world of interior design doing it all on my own. It was daunting at times, but nonetheless exciting!

♥ **Why did you enter the show?**

I'd always had an aspiration to do some work on TV and to hopefully be recognised for my talents in something and, as interior design is a big passion of mine, this married up perfectly. I had also said for a long time that I wanted to see our house featured on TV or in a magazine, as I was incredibly proud of what we'd achieved, and luckily for me I was able to do both. I never considered that I would go as far in the competition as I did, but I relished each and every challenge as it was given to me and made the most of each opportunity to show what I was capable of.

♥ **Tell us a little bit about the process of becoming involved with a show like that.**

I stumbled across the show after being told about it by a family member. I watched a few episodes online and then saw that they were advertising for people for the second series. I just thought, what have I got to lose? I submitted my application together with pictures of my home and that was it for a few weeks. They must have thought I was worth a punt, as they then asked me to produce a mock scheme for a fictional room. They loved what I produced and then I did several telephone interviews and a test shoot, before finally being told I'd made the final cut. I distinctly remember the call I received from

the producers informing me that I'd got on the show and it was then just a case of waiting to hear which episode I'd been allocated for my first challenge. It was a mixture of excitement, nervousness and going into the unknown! It still makes me smile now when I think about it.

♥ **At what stage did you really start to believe you could win?**

I think you only ever enter any type of competition because you want to win, otherwise why bother in the first place? But it was also very much about the experience and fulfilling a lifelong ambition. When you're in the thick of it, winning is so far at the back of your mind, because your sole focus is on producing the best possible room, in the shortest timescale and with a minimal budget. It consumes you, and it's only afterwards when the judges are ready to see what you've done that it all comes back to you that it's a competition. And that's when you remember how much you want to win and get through to the next round. It's a real emotional roller coaster. I know everybody says this, but I honestly never thought I would go as far as I did. I always thought that somebody better would be coming up behind me and would knock me off my spot. And I came close on more than one occasion. But one of the things that I always believe in, is that you only get out of something what you put in and I put my heart and soul into the whole competition from start to finish. It dominated everything I did for a long time and some may say that's a tad excessive, but in reality I was only ever going to get the chance to do this once, so I had to know that I'd given it my all for my own piece of mind.

♥ **What would your advice be to anyone wanting to put themselves forward for a show?**

I would say stop thinking about it and just do it – but be prepared to work incredibly hard and push yourself to your limits if you want to achieve something and be recognised for what you've done. You need a good network of friends and family around to support you throughout the whole process and I cannot stress that enough. An understanding boss also helps, as I had to take extensive periods of time off work and this is not something most workplaces will just allow, so I was incredibly grateful for that. The final thing I would say is to try and enjoy it. Don't get too caught up in the hysteria of it all, as ultimately you want to look back on the whole experience with fond memories. I don't think there's a day that goes by when the events of filming last year don't pop into my head and it always puts a big grin on my face!

♥ **Interior design is a passion for you, but are there other design areas you'd like to explore?**
Both myself and Mark would love to have a



go at doing some large scale window design and dressing. We both love nothing more than a trip to Selfridges or Liberty and find those carefully curated scenes a real delight and incredibly inspirational. To be asked to do something like that would be a dream come true, as it's a perfect combination of interior design and theatre, our two big passions.

I think for me the one thing I've found is that, in this industry, you're always learning and this is critical in order to be at the top of your game. I don't profess to know everything, in fact far from it, and this is still a very steep learning curve for me, but that's what makes it all the more exciting as I love to learn new things and develop over time. I very recently read a comment made about the work of Alexander McQueen and how he broke the rules and pushed the boundaries to the limits in his designs, but that in order to break the rules he first mastered them every possible way. This is so true of all the design greats and is something that we should all carry with us and aspire to achieve, as that's what makes the very best design.

♥ **Your company MartinMark Design is well established now. Was it hard work to get the company set up and recognized?**

We were incredibly lucky to have the TV show as a platform for our business to be launched and grow from. Very few people get this chance, so we had to make the absolute most of it. I think in reality it's possibly harder now than it was in the beginning, as we're now juggling so many other priorities, whereas at the start it was all about finding ourselves.

♥ **Your partner Mark Walters must really bring something else to the table with his background in costume and set design?**

Mark has been doing his job for over 15 years and has a wealth of experience and knowledge across all areas. He's a huge source of inspiration and has a talent for turning things on their head and taking a completely different perspective, which is how ideas develop into exciting realities and that's one of the fun things about working with him. He's really helped me to develop as a designer and grow, and that process will continue as our business develops.

♥ **After the show, you must have had lots of interesting offers of work. What was the first one you decided to agree to do and why?**

Our work to date has been spread far and wide and we seem to spend as much time travelling to meet with clients and discuss their needs as we do sitting at the desk designing and sourcing for them. We received a vast amount of initial enquiries from people, but we quickly realised that many of these weren't necessarily genuine offers of work, with some not responding any further and

others expecting us to work for free. However, we soon agreed on our first job based in Nottingham in a beautiful Arts and Crafts style house, working for a great couple looking to have their master bedroom redesigned and a walk in wardrobe incorporated into this. From there the projects started to build up and we're now working on a wide portfolio, with some incredibly interesting homes and even more interesting clients!

♥ **You have recently bought a 1930s house to renovate. Is property development something you would like to do more of in the future?**

Absolutely! We're addicted to ripping the guts out of a house and then putting it all back together again, but a million times better. Generally we love period properties and the wealth of features they offer, but we're not against any particular style and are very open minded. We're also really keen on anything with a quirky or unusual layout, as these can often offer the biggest potential to transform. The house we're currently working on is a traditional 1930s semi-detached house, which was a complete last minute purchase. We found ourselves in a position where we had sold our house and had nothing else to move into and just couldn't find anything that we immediately fell for. We saw this and, although it wasn't what we'd hoped for, it had huge potential to transform and turn into something very different. The house was completely devoid of any real character and had no features, so for us it was the perfect chance to breathe new life into it and make our own statement in so many other ways.

♥ **How much of a renovation project do you like to manage?**

I'm a Virgo and we're naturally perfectionists, which can be a blessing and a curse, but it's especially useful when managing a project to completion. I've had a lot of experience in this in my previous roles and I think it's essential to have that overview if you want to take complete control over a project and see it all the way through. This is also invaluable to clients where they need the reassurance that their project will be completed to budget, on time and to the standard they expect. Mark also has a great talent for this in designing shows for stage, as he has to oversee the whole thing from inception to the finished design being built and created for the actors to use. We work well together in this respect and our talents complement one another.

♥ **Sum up your design style in three words.**

Elegant, unexpected, timeless.

For more information about Martin, visit his website at martinmarkdesign.com





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Old ladder bath rack

HOME REFURB

When you're relaxing in the bath, the last thing you want to do is to have to get out to rummage in a cupboard, so keep your bath treats and essentials to hand with a bath rack made from an old ladder.

Project and photography © Almie Louis from Grand Recycler (grandrecycler.com)

MATERIALS

- ☐ Wooden ladder
- ☐ Builder's planks/leftover tiles

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Mitre or hand saw
- ☐ Measuring tape

♥ **STEP ONE** Measure the width of your bath and add 15cm on both sides.

♥ **STEP TWO** Use the mitre saw to cut the ladder according to the measurements. (Make sure to check the ladder before sawing, as some have a steel line between the wood panels for strengthening.)

♥ **STEP THREE** Scrub the newly-cut bath rack with a brush and soapy water.

♥ **STEP FOUR** Allow to dry.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Use sawn up bits of planks or tiles as shelves placed across the rungs.

TOP TIP

Depending on where your bath is located, add wooden blocks, door stops or similar underneath the rack that fit either side of the bath edge to stop the rack sliding off if bumped against.





Jackson Pollock inspired table



The latest inspirational furniture painting project from Annie Sloan shows you how to create a 'splatter' table inspired by American expressionists like Jackson Pollock. Now it's your turn to take up a brush and create...

Project and photography by Annie Sloan (www.anniesloan.com)

MATERIALS

- ☐ Well-worn table
- ☐ Annie Sloan Chalk Paint™ in Graphite, Provence
- ☐ Annie Sloan Clear Wax

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Paintbrushes
- ☐ Sandpaper
- ☐ Masking tape

♥ **STEP ONE** A well-worn table top works well for this project. This table was used for colour mixing in Annie Sloan's studio and was a mixture of coloured splodges and uneven finishes. Annie liked the different textures, so worked with what was already there.

♥ **STEP TWO** Annie chose one Chalk Paint™ colour as a base – Graphite – and painted straight over the existing surface as it was, bumps and all. (If there are uneven surfaces that you do not want on your table, then

scrape those bits away and paint the surface with your chosen Chalk Paint™ colour.) Annie then rubbed and sanded the surface again to create the right amount of 'splatter'.

♥ **STEP THREE** To create definition, Annie framed this design with a line around the edge. Using masking tape to create a line inside the edges of the table top with Chalk Paint™ in Provence.

♥ **STEP FOUR** To continue the frame, Annie painted the remaining parts – the sides and table legs in Provence and, as a finishing touch, painted a small band around the feet in Graphite.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Finally Annie Sloan Clear Wax was applied to seal the surface.

ANNIE SLOAN SAYS

"I love the abstract look and the textural feel of the surface. I wasn't after a particular effect – I just liked what I was doing – and it was only when I finished that I thought it reminded me of the amazing textural, and often turbulent, American abstract expressionist paintings of the 1940s, '50s and '60s, by such as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko."





FOOTSTOOL SLIPCOVER

Upcycle an old-fashioned footstool with a neat little slipcover in a smart fabric. It's easy to make in just an afternoon.

By DK Publishing



MAKE A COUPLE OF COVERS IN DIFFERENT FABRICS, THEN YOU CAN RING THE CHANGES EVERY FEW MONTHS.



FOOTSTOOL SLIPCOVER HOW TO...

MATERIALS

- ☐ Old footstool
- ☐ Medium-weight furnishing fabric
- ☐ Matching thread

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Fabric tape measure
- ☐ Dressmaker's curve or small plate
- ☐ Marker pen (optional)
- ☐ Pins
- ☐ Ruler
- ☐ Tailor's chalk
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Hand sewing needle
- ☐ Sewing machine

♥ **STEP ONE** Measure the width and depth of the footstool seat and the desired height of the cover. Calculate the cutting measurements (see below left).

♥ **STEP TWO** Place a dressmaker's curve at the corner of the footstool and shape it to fit the curve. Alternatively, place a small plate on the corner and slide the plate backwards until the straight sides of the footstool intersect with the edges of the plate. Make a mark on each side of the plate at these points.

♥ **STEP THREE** Use pins to plot the measurements for the footstool top on the wrong side of the fabric. Join the pins with lines using a ruler and tailor's chalk.

♥ **STEP FOUR** Plot the measurements for the skirt on the fabric in the same way. Cut out the top and the two pieces for the skirt.

♥ **STEP FIVE** To mark the curved corners of the top, place the dressmaker's curve or the plate on one corner of the top. Position the dressmaker's curve so the shape made by the fabric beyond the curve is symmetrical. If using a plate, slide it until the marks on the plate meet the straight sides of the top. Draw in the curve and cut along the line.

♥ **STEP SIX** Fold the curved corner to meet an opposite corner. Pin together, then cut around the curve.

♥ **STEP SEVEN** Fold the top in half the other way, so the curved corners meet the opposite edge. Pin and cut the remaining two corners.

♥ **STEP EIGHT** Fold the top in half crosswise, then in half again. Mark the half and quarter points with pins. Set the top aside.

MAKING THE SKIRT

♥ **STEP ONE** With right sides face up, fold under the short edge of one of the two skirt pieces and lay it on the short edge of the other. If using a patterned fabric, align the pieces so the pattern matches. Press.

♥ **STEP TWO** Pin in place, then slipstitch along the pressed edge to join the two pieces.

♥ **STEP THREE** Unfold the top piece so that the two pieces are right sides together. Machine along the line of slipstitches. Trim the seam allowance to 1.5cm.

♥ **STEP FOUR** Place the top on a work surface. 'Walk' a fabric tape measure around the top to measure its perimeter, divide by two and add a 1.5cm seam allowance.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Place the skirt on the work surface. Starting at the seam, measure along the long side of the skirt by this amount. Draw a chalk line across the skirt at this point and cut along the line. Again starting at the seam, but working in the other direction, repeat and cut the other end of the skirt along the marked line.

♥ **STEP SIX** With right sides facing, pin the two short ends of the skirt together. Stitch a 1.5cm seam and press open. The skirt should now form a continuous loop.

♥ **STEP SEVEN** With the skirt face down, fold back then press 4cm along one long side. Fold under 1cm towards the foldline. Pin this hem in place.

♥ **STEP EIGHT** Using a number 3 stitch, machine around the hem as close to the folded edge as possible.

ASSEMBLING THE COVER

♥ **STEP ONE** Place the skirt right sides together, matching the seams. Pin at the seams to mark the half points. Fold in half again and mark the quarter points.

♥ **STEP TWO** Lay the raw edge of the skirt on the edge of the top with right sides facing. Match the half and quarter points on the two pieces. Ease the fabric between the points and secure with pins.

♥ **STEP THREE** With the skirt on top, stitch the top and the skirt together with a 1.5cm allowance. Turn to the right side and slip the cover over your footstool.



This project is taken from *Handmade Interiors*, published by DK Publishing. RRP £20

CUTTING

MEASUREMENTS

Top (cut 1): width of seat + 3cm seam allowance x depth of seat + 3cm seam allowance.

Skirt (cut 2): height + 1.5cm seam allowance + 4cm allowance for the hem x width of fabric.



Best Up Creations

Sally FitzGerald ventures into a world of renaissance zombie contessas, cat-head historical figures and fine china, the amazing creations of Angela Rossi.

UPCYCLING HEROES



- ♥ **Here** Angela at work with animal head models for inspiration
- ♥ **Bottom left** A Modern Lady Portrait plate
- ♥ **Bottom near right** You're not imagining it, this is a Yoda and the Nymphs Portrait plate

- ♥ **Top right** Duchess Cyclops Portrait
- ♥ **Middle right** Queen Nadira of Persia
- ♥ **Bottom right** Timeless Tiger Portrait



When it comes to upcycling, your creativity is the only limitation. This is what appeals to most people – the sense that you can take an object that was once beautiful, yet that today most people would cast aside, and through adding your own personality and sense of style you can once again make it desirable. This is exactly what Angela Rossi, from Los Angeles, achieves every day through her upcycling company Beat Up Creations.

In 2009, Angela launched her business making and selling upcycled assemblage sculptures. She would gather collections of abused, broken and forgotten items to piece them back together in unusual, one of kind creations, often with a focus on vintage doll parts and anthropomorphism.

Angela had grown up with an appreciation for vintage as her mother was an avid antique collector and dealer. But her upbringing wasn't the only influence her mum's career would have on Angela's own, and soon became the reason for Angela's upcycling business going

off in a slightly different direction. Angela explains, "When my mom retired she began getting rid of lots of stuff, and within that 'stuff' was lots of old plates. Some were old portrait plates with demure ladies posed in proper positions and big fluffy dresses. They were all beautiful with hand painted details, gold accents and delicate porcelain, but in reality they did not exactly match my modern, urban style. So were they useless? No, I decided I had to make them cool again, and so I started making the plates in 2010."

The first upcycled plate Angela created has remained her favourite to date, as she reveals. "I knew that I wanted to make a piece with pop culture juxtaposition. So I created 'The Zombie Contessa', which is a portrait of a classical renaissance zombie on a fabulous gold Limoges plate. I was so happy with the finished product and that the thoughts that were in my head were actually able to become a reality."

Angela's plates have continued to be transformed in a similar way, with the desire to make these vintage treasures surprise and

humour is the greatest influence in my

is about revitalising these beautiful vintage

Some of Angela's most eye-catching

dressed figure. Glance at the costume of the character on the plate and in place of a

or Labrador. What first inspired Angela to try this? "I tend to view people as animals and

that they remind me of, rather than their name

the plates. I love the contrast they bring to the classic plate. I think it adds a bit of humour

consuming job, so Angela has discovered

each plate by hand. So I did some research and found a very new technique using digital

stores, estate sales etc. Each plate is then

portraits. The plate is finished using a ceramic decal and fired in a kiln. Each plate requires a slightly different process, and everything has been a learning curve. Many plates are

But despite the challenges the plates

amazing. They have been hand painted, hand embellished with gold gilding, they may have

recently started a new line of inappropriate

at www.beatupcreations.com



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Read Annie Sloan's exclusive column every issue!



"I've been working with *Reloved* for a while, and I love their style and their whole approach. I was thrilled when they invited me to

become a contributor. Now I can create exclusive projects especially for you to try out. I'm going to approach this a bit like a diary and the chapters of a new book. In my column I am going to show a mix of techniques, styles, colour combinations and mixes. But I would also love to hear from you about any particular topics you'd like know about. Looking forward to hearing from you!"

Annie Sloan

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Jelly mould candle holder



Can we ever have too many candle holders? Instead of throwing away used objects with nice shapes, you can transform them into something that is once again useful, by casting them in concrete.

Project and photography by Johanna John

MATERIALS

- ☐ **Snowcrete** (white cement)
- ☐ **Kiln dried sand**
- ☐ **Jelly moulds, or other container**
- ☐ **Small yoghurt pots, to fit a candle**
- ☐ **Little tealights in metal pots**
- ☐ **Heavy duty tape**
- ☐ **Release agent or wax** (optional)
- ☐ **Polyfilla** (optional)

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ **Safety goggles, mask, plastic gloves and plastic sheet to protect the floor**
- ☐ **Plastic bin bag**

♥ **STEP ONE** Find a container. If you have no jelly moulds, despair not! You might find all that you need in the recycling bag. Plastic and waxed carton boxes are great. Any unwaxed paper packaging must be treated with PVA or varnish to stop leakages.

♥ **STEP TWO** Decide what tealights you want to use, then find a yoghurt pot or similar with a flat base that your tealights fit into.

♥ **STEP THREE** Insert the yoghurt container upside down into the base of your jelly pot, and tape it in place. Use plenty of heavy duty tape and make sure the edge is water tight. Remember that no tape should be on the inside of your mould, as that would create ugly marks. The depth of the inserted yoghurt pot will determine how deep your candle will sit in your final holder. Preparing the mould well is vital – it's hard to make changes once the concrete is poured.

♥ **STEP FOUR** It can be a little hard to remove your cured concrete from the mould. If you

are using pots from your recycling bag, they can be destroyed and that makes it easier. Some people oil their moulds. I don't, as it gives the piece a sandy surface. You can buy release agents and silicone spray formulated for concrete and casting, or you can use wax.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Prepare your area. You want to cover the ground with plastic. Place the prepared moulds upside down inside of an opened bin bag. Concrete dries harder if it dries slowly. Wrapping the concrete airtight in a bin bag as it cures adds a few days to the process and increases the quality and strength of your final piece.

♥ **STEP SIX** Be safe. It is important to use goggles, a mask and plastic gloves. Breathing in the concrete is dangerous and it can burn skin and damage eyes. Always read the manufacturer's safety data sheet. Be careful as you handle it in both powder and wet form.

♥ **STEP SEVEN** Mix your concrete. Use one part Snowcrete to two parts sand. Stir them together well before adding the water. Add small quantities of water at a time. It's easy to make concrete too thin. Aim for a solid porridge consistency!



♥ **STEP EIGHT** Put in the mix. Vibrate the mould in your hand as you fill it. Keep vibrating and tapping to make air bubbles rise to the surface. The more bubbles you get rid of, the smoother the surface will be.

♥ **STEP NINE** Seal the bin bag around the cast and leave for three or four days.

♥ **STEP TEN** Removing an object from a mould is the best part of the process, but can be tricky. A water bath can help release the object. Sometimes it's enough to insert a knife or similar around the edge, bending slightly.

TOP TIP

There may be air bubbles or other blemishes in the finished piece. Sometimes you end up with a damaged edge from bending the object out of the mould. Some of these marks can add beauty, and some are unwanted. You can use Polyfilla to fill air bubbles, cracks or scratches.



Rustic soap strainer

MIDWEEK MAKE

Bathrooms can be cold and unwelcoming, but adding just a few small elements of nature can change the feel of the room. Use a bowl of your choice and make a soap strainer for the top out of pieces of bamboo.

Project and photography © Almie Louis from Grand Recycler (grandrecycler.com)

MATERIALS

- ☐ Small bowl
- ☐ Bamboo or wooden pieces
- ☐ Raffia or string

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Garden secateurs
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Measuring tape

♥ **STEP ONE** Measure the opening of your bowl with a measuring tape.

♥ **STEP TWO** Using these measurements, cut six pieces of bamboo or wood to the required size to fit across the bowl top.

♥ **STEP THREE** Place in a criss-cross pattern and bind with the raffia or string.

♥ **STEP FOUR** Place the newly-made strainer on top of the bowl and display your homemade soap for your guests.

TOP TIP

This idea works best if the bamboo theme is repeated elsewhere in the room, either with more items made from it or by echoing it in the decor colouring.



Upstyle your windows

Windows don't just let light into your rooms, they also play an important role in framing the view and setting the tone for the room itself. Our handy tutorials show you how to upstyle your windows to give your rooms a brilliant new look.

By Hannah Stanton

Customising curtains and blinds

Adding your own unique twist to ready-made curtains and blinds, or simply customising your own fabric, is immensely satisfying. Be playful with whatever technique you employ and find inspiration in your surroundings. Brainstorm and keep a sketchbook handy. Try to come up with unexpected ideas and experiment with materials. Below are some ideas to get you started.

BLOCK AND LINOLEUM PRINTING

A linoleum print is not far removed from the classic potato print. It's suited to line-heavy designs rather than flat blocks of colour, and the finished print has a handmade, textural quality. Linoleum is available as a flat sheet or ready-mounted on a woodblock, and is cut with a special linoleum cutting tool. Look out for shops selling starter kits, rather than diving in and investing in an array of cutters.

Freehand-draw or trace your image (reversed) onto the linoleum. If possible, clamp the linoleum down so you have more control, and keep both hands behind the blade when cutting. Heating the lino slightly will make it easier to cut. With careful positioning and marking, it is possible to produce repeated patterns. Experiment with different colours by offsetting the linoleum on the next print, but check the transparency of the ink and how the colours mix before committing to your final fabric.

DIGITAL FABRIC PRINTING

Digital fabric printing enables you to print multiple colours, so you can be as creative as you like in terms of colour and pattern. Online companies specialising in digital fabric printing are popping up everywhere. Some offer a small-run service, which is great if you only need enough fabric for a pair of curtains or a blind. Creating a unique design for your soft furnishings has become so simple and you don't need to be a computer genius, as some companies even offer a design and set-up service.

SCREEN-PRINTING

All the tools and chemicals you need to screen-print at home can be bought online or from large art and craft suppliers. You can also make a simple print without the use of chemicals – simply cut a paper stencil

and place it between the screen and fabric, then pull some ink across the screen with a squeegee. The ink will only transfer to the fabric through the open area of the stencil. If you opt to use chemicals and expose the screen, you'll need somewhere completely dark for the light-sensitive screen to dry, and you'll also need the correct wattage bulb for exposing. Whichever method you choose, test the print on a scrap piece of fabric first – it might be that you need to pull the squeegee over the screen more than once to get a decent print.

Taking a course in screen printing is by far the best way to learn the basics because of the tips, advice and inspiration you get from working with other printmakers.

EMBELLISHING

Traditional embroidery is the act of decorating fabric using a needle and thread, but these days there's no need to be restricted. Even the most basic sewing techniques can change the feel of a fabric.

Appliqué, meaning 'applied', has been

around for centuries. The process involves cutting out a shape in one fabric and stitching it to another. If you're an appliqué novice, start with a simple, basic shape. Unless you're using felt, some fabrics will fray once they are cut. The best way to avoid this is to use the sheet variety of fusible web. It comes with a paper side and a shiny side, the latter being covered in glue. Make sure whichever brand you are using is suitable for machine stitching. Draw your shapes onto the paper side of the web, lay the shiny side onto the reverse of the fabric, and press. Cut out the shapes, remove the paper from the web to expose the glue, lay the glued side down on the main fabric, and press again.

Now stitch around the perimeter of the design with zigzag or straight stitch. Rather than reverse stitching at the beginning and end, simply pull the threads to the reverse of the fabric and tie off. To do this, turn the fabric over and pull on the bobbin thread. This will start to bring the needle thread through the fabric. Use a pin to pull the thread fully through and tie off.



Customising your curtains and blinds is a great way to bring a fresh look to your windows, so get creative with these four basic techniques and experiment with new ideas.



Stencilling

Stencils are a quick way to apply a repeating pattern. Cut your own or choose from a huge variety online.

I love print making. Even the humble potato can deliver a fantastic print. For me, part of the satisfaction of printing is in the simple cutting of the lino or stencil. If you're in a hurry or don't trust your cutting skills, there are hoards of stencils and stamps available in shops or online. For this tutorial I'm cutting a stencil using a sheet of acetate. Frisket Film is great for more complicated designs, as the tacky back holds the stencil in place. Cardboard is good for large and simple designs, but paper is really only suitable for a one-off print.

MATERIALS

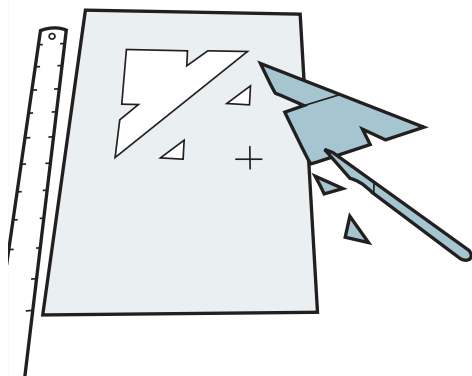
- ☐ Acetate or Frisket Film
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Curtain or blind
- ☐ Masking tape
- ☐ Fabric paint
- ☐ Scrap piece of fabric for testing
- ☐ Absorbent paper

EQUIPMENT

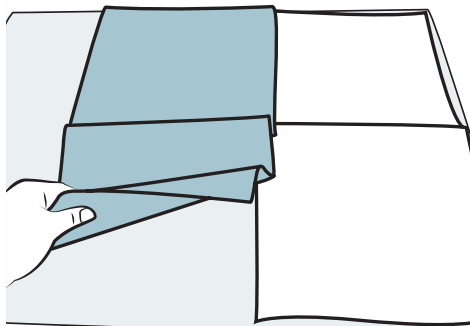
- ☐ Permanent marker
- ☐ Cutting mat
- ☐ Craft knife
- ☐ Ruler
- ☐ Roller tray
- ☐ Roller or stencil dabber
- ☐ Plastic sheet

♥ **STEP ONE** Draw out your design on paper. Place the acetate or film over the design and tape down to hold in place. Trace your design using a permanent marker.

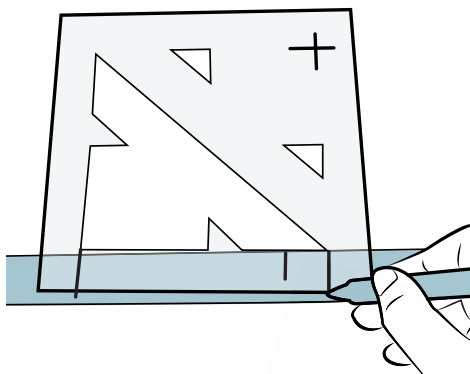
♥ **STEP TWO** Cut out the shape using your craft knife.



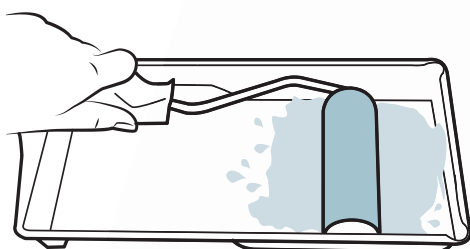
♥ **STEP THREE** Lay a sheet of plastic on your work surface, then cover this with some absorbent paper.



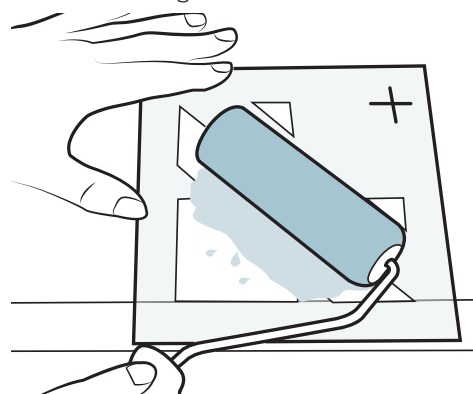
♥ **STEP FOUR** Press the curtain or blind fabric flat. Lay your curtain or blind on top of the paper. If the stencil relies heavily on a repeating pattern or is very straight, mark the positioning with some masking tape.



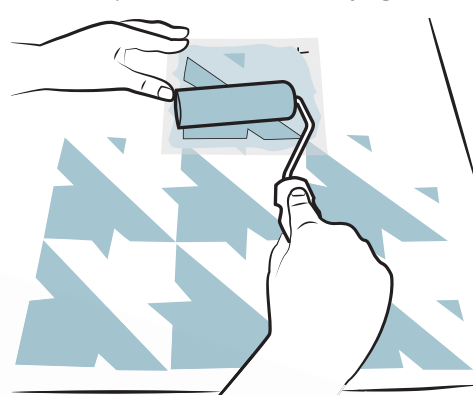
♥ **STEP FIVE** Pour the fabric paint into the roller tray. Load the roller with paint and offload in the tray. To do this, repeatedly roll the roller in one direction in the tray. The paint will even itself out over the surface of the roller.



♥ **STEP SIX** Hold the stencil down with one hand and roll over it with the paint roller. The paint will dispense differently depending on the density of the roller itself and the sort of fabric you are using. You may need to repeat application or apply more pressure as you go for better coverage.



♥ **STEP SEVEN** Carefully remove the stencil and reposition, applying with paint again, and follow the paint instructions for drying.



TOP TIP

Mark the corners of your design on the acetate. This will help line everything up as you move along the fabric.

Trims

You can use trimmings as a border or to add length and interest to old curtains.

The addition of a trim can really transform the look of a curtain or blind. There are plenty to choose from – braids, fringes, beads, pompoms, lace and feathers – the list goes on. Don't feel limited by the selection of notions sold specifically for curtains. Choose trims with good structure that will attach to the leading edges of your curtains and allow you to see them in their full glory. Feathers and braids hold their shape well, and ruffles made from a stiff fabric like linen are also a good option. Fringes and trims are perfect when attached to the bottom of blinds.

In many cases, the trim and its border are designed to be visible. To attach, make up the curtain in the usual way and machine stitch in place. If the border is very narrow, pin and stitch by hand. In this example I'm concealing the border in the bottom of a Roman blind, but this method of attaching the trim would be the same for curtains.

MATERIALS

- ☐ **Trim**
- ☐ **Curtain or blind panel**
- ☐ **Thread**

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ **Tailor's chalk**
- ☐ **Sewing machine**
- ☐ **Scissors**
- ☐ **Pins**
- ☐ **Ruler**
- ☐ **Iron**

♥ **STEP ONE** Make a note of the measurement between the base of the trim and where the visible element starts. This will be your cutting allowance for step 2 and the seam allowance for step 6. If the border is narrower than 1cm, machine stitch a length of cotton webbing or similar to the trim to extend the selvedge.

♥ **STEP TWO** Mark the finished drop point on the main blind panel. Add on the measurement from step 1, draw a line and trim the fabric.

♥ **STEP THREE** With the blind right side up, pin the trim along the bottom edge. The decorative edge of the trim will be facing into the blind.

♥ **STEP FOUR** Cut a piece of fabric for the facing. It needs to be the width of the finished blind, plus extra for side turnings. If you're making a Roman blind, the depth of the facing needs to be 10cm, plus the seam allowance from step 1.

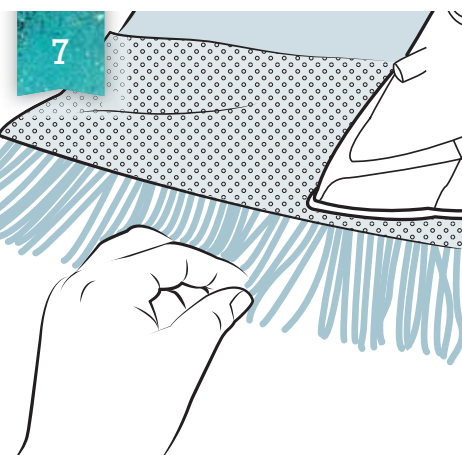
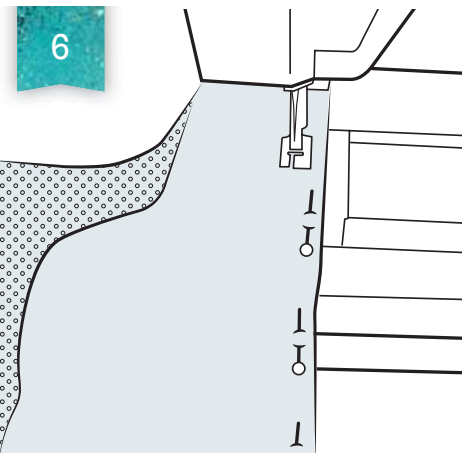
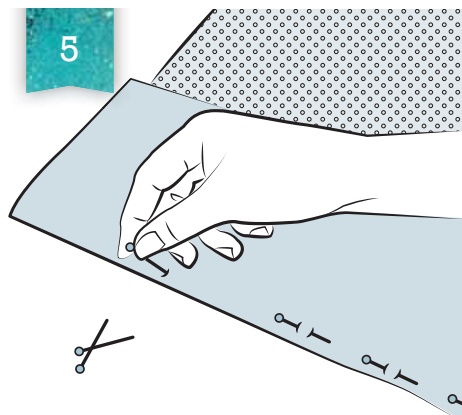
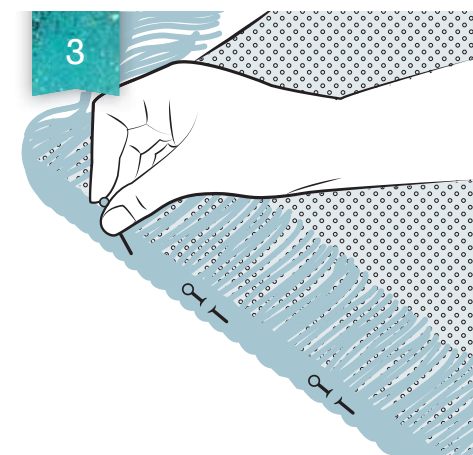
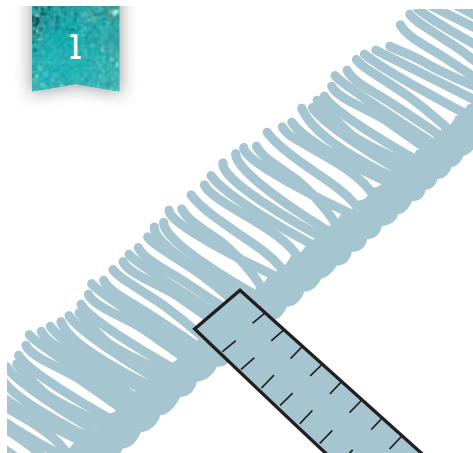
♥ **STEP FIVE** Place the facing right side down on top of the trim, raw edges together. Remove the pins, and replace to hold all three layers together. The order should be: main fabric, trim, facing.

♥ **STEP SIX** Stitch all three together with the seam allowance calculated in step 1.

♥ **STEP SEVEN** Turn back the facing so that the right side is upwards on the reverse of the blind. Press to make the bottom line of the blind crisp while pulling gently on the trim. This will help bring the seam out. If the trim is not being inserted into a lined curtain or blind, fold, press and stitch the raw edge of the facing to the main fabric.

TOP TIP

Some trims can fray easily when cut, so consider applying a liquid seam sealant or hot glue to the raw edge. For others, machine zigzag or hand stitch the ends in place.



Ombre dyeing

Ombre or dip dyeing creates a graduated colour effect on the fabric, which looks terrific.

Dyeing fabric is easy, and changing the colour of the material can dramatically update your curtains and blinds. Before committing to metres of potentially expensive fabric for a new project, research how the fabric will work with the dye. Cotton, linen and viscose generally take colour well, while synthetics will give lighter results or not take the dye at all. If in doubt, check with the fabric supplier. Some major dye manufacturers offer a service that allows you to send fabric samples off for testing. If the fabric is already coloured, adding dye will produce a new colour. Here are a few examples of colour mixing results:

Red + blue = purple

Blue + yellow = green

Red + yellow = orange

As a general rule, you will need commercial dye, salt and warm and cold water. Warm salty water opens up the fibres in the fabric and helps the dye to be absorbed. Cold water halts the dyeing process at the desired point. Different dyes have their own instructions for use, so follow these for the best results, and always use the correct amount of dye for the weight of fabric.

Ombre or dip dyeing will require a touch more effort, but the results can be fantastic and create a more bespoke finish. Whichever dyeing technique you employ, there are a few things you need to consider.

With ombre, setting up a dyeing stand is paramount. The fabric will need to be suspended above the bucket of dye at various heights during the process. I've hung the fabric over a pole between two step ladders. If the fabric panel is wide, it's best to use a wide and deep tray. A plastic window box (without holes) is ideal. If you are limited to a bucket, make sure there aren't any folds in the fabric, otherwise you could end up with patchy areas.



This masterclass is taken from *Upstyle Your Windows* by Hannah Stanton, published Apple Press. **RRP £14.99**

MATERIALS

- ☐ **Curtains**
- ☐ **Fabric dye**
- ☐ **Salt**

EQUIPMENT

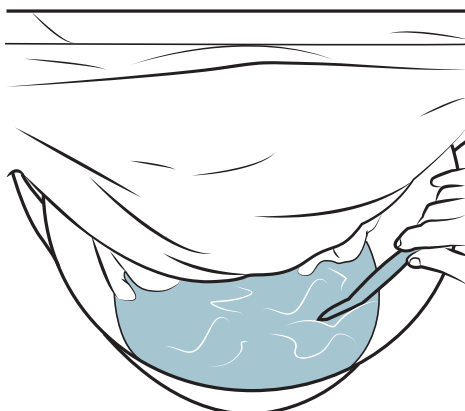
- ☐ **A big bucket**
- ☐ **Some kind of holding device**
- ☐ **Rubber gloves**
- ☐ **Mixing implement**

♥ **STEP ONE** Wash the curtain at the correct temperature. Mix a packet of fabric dye with warm water in a small jug.

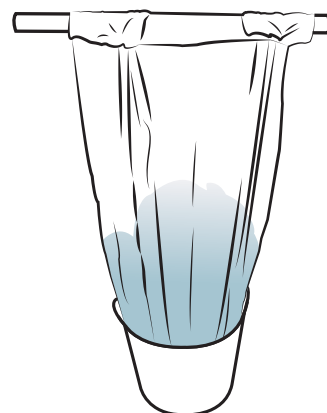


♥ **STEP TWO** Measure roughly 6 litres of warm water into a bucket. Pour a quarter of the mixed dye into the bucket. Pour in the salt and mix everything together well.

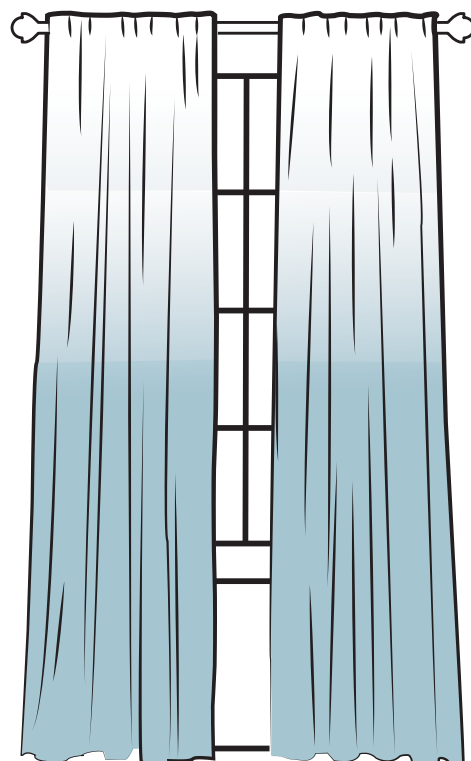
♥ **STEP THREE** Wrap the fabric around a pole and pin in place. I've used a cardboard fabric roll. You could try using a broom handle or wooden dowel. Submerge the fabric in the dye and leave for about 15 minutes.



♥ **STEP FOUR** Move the pole up the ladder and add another quarter of the dye to the bucket. Repeat this process for however many stages you'd like. I like to use a slightly darker but matching dye for the very last shade to add a touch more contrast.



♥ **STEP FIVE** When you are happy with the effect, remove the fabric from the dye and rinse in cold water until the water runs clear. Hang out to dry away from direct sunlight. Finally, wash the fabric with detergent at the correct temperature.





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Cutting board wall art

HOME REFURB

Do you have any wooden cutting boards lying around that you don't know what to do with? This simple tutorial shows you how to easily transform them into decorative DIY word art for your kitchen.

Project and photography by Jamie Hoover from Anderson + Grant (www.andersonandgrant.com)

MATERIALS

- ☐ Chopping boards
- ☐ Stain (optional)
- ☐ Wood letters
- ☐ Paint
- ☐ Glue

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Knife
- ☐ Paintbrushes

♥ **STEP ONE** The boards I used were not very old, so before starting the project they had to be distressed and aged. This was done by using a knife to cut all over the board. The edges were pounded in places with the handle of the knife to distress them. The cutting boards were stained in three different colours. If you are lucky enough to have some vintage cutting boards, this ageing step can be omitted.

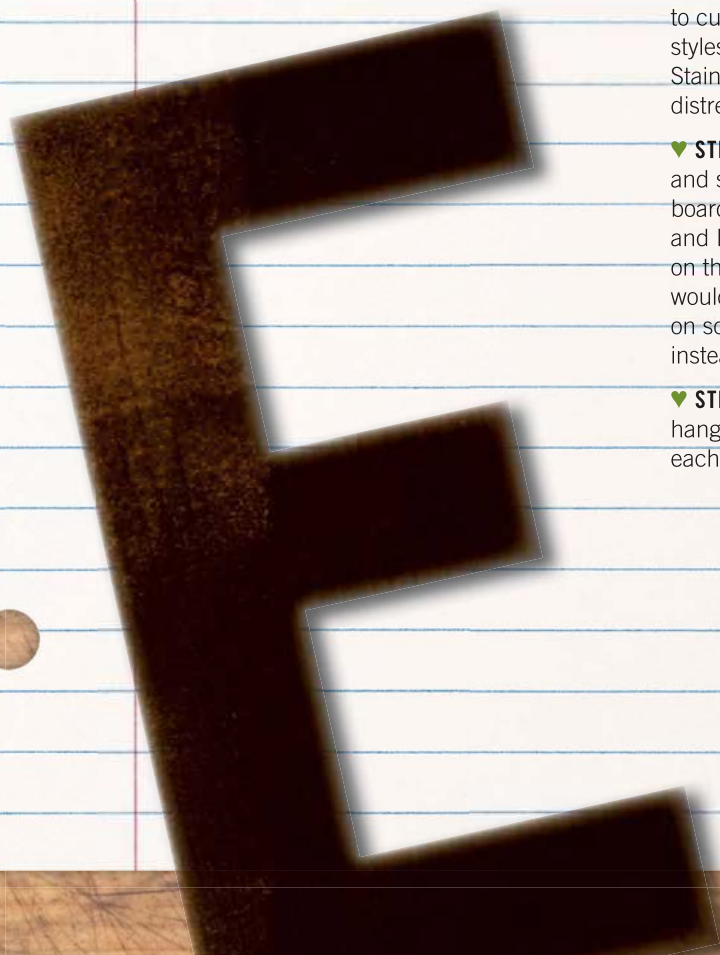
♥ **STEP TWO** It is up to you to form any word that you think would be appropriate for the kitchen. I chose the word EAT. Paint wood letters from the craft store black and distress them. This is another step that will allow you to customise your kitchen art. Use different styles of letters rather than ones that match. Stain them rather than painting. Skip the distressing if you like a clean look.

♥ **STEP THREE** When the letters are painted and sanded, simply glue them onto the boards. These boards were different heights, and I knew that I would be staggering them on the wall. So, I lined them up how they would be hanging, and then glued the letters on so that they would be in a straight line instead of the boards being in a straight line.

♥ **STEP FOUR** To finish the art off before hanging, wrap jute twine around the neck of each handle and tie it off in a knot.

TOP TIP

If you're only looking to make a temporary piece of art, then you can attach the letters with double-sided tape and reuse both the cutting boards and letters for other projects later.





Floral wood effects

HOME REFURB

This is a super simple process just using floral napkins on a wooden surface, but it looks amazing! Find some fun napkins from an online shop, pick a piece of furniture that needs a revamp and you'll soon be finished.

Project and photography by Sausha Khoundet from Sweet Pickins (www.sweetpickinsfurniture.com)

MATERIALS

- ☐ **Wooden furniture**
- ☐ **Mod Podge**
- ☐ **Pretty napkins**
- ☐ **Top coat**
- ☐ **Paint** (if desired)

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ **Sandpaper**
- ☐ **Paintbrushes**

♥ **STEP ONE** Gather your napkins and prepare your wood, painting it and leaving to dry, if so desired.

♥ **STEP TWO** This is the most important step. Your napkins will be 3-ply – it's super important if you want a distressed look that you remove the two white sheets behind the printed one. On most of the napkins, the one sheet will come off really easily, but you really need to get your fingernails under the second sheet to peel it back. Throw away the two white sheets and you're just going to use the printed one.

♥ **STEP THREE** After you have peeled your napkin, apply the Mod Podge to the board. I tend to apply it a little heavily, so the napkin really gets into all the wood grooves and is really soaked and almost looks transparent. This makes it look more like it has been printed or painted directly onto the wood, rather than just laying on top of it.

♥ **STEP FOUR** After brushing on the Mod Podge, just lay the napkin on the wood. The napkin is thin, but it's really not going to tear or break on you. If it does, then don't worry about it, because you will be distressing it in the end. I don't do anything special to apply the napkin – just push down and smooth it

out with your hand. I make sure to press it into the wood. The napkin will start looking transparent, so you will know when it's done. Don't worry if you have wrinkles or creases, they will look fine in the end. Importantly, do not Mod Podge over the top! If you do, you will not be able to distress them very easily. You may not want them distressed for your project and in that case you're fine to go over the top, but in my case I never Mod Podge over the top.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Remove excess napkin from the sides with a wood block or sandpaper.



♥ **STEP SIX** After the napkins have dried, they look good and could be used like this, but I prefer to distress them, as I think that it makes all the difference. Lightly sand until you like the effect.



♥ **STEP SEVEN** Apply the topcoat over the top of the napkin to protect the finish.

TOP TIP

You can glaze or dark wax over the top of the napkins to tone down the paper a bit.



FABRIC CARD HOLDER

This is a quick project, ideal for using up scraps of bandana. Make it in monochrome or use up contrasting vibrant scraps.

By Jemima Schlee



YOU CAN ADJUST THE PROPORTIONS OF THE CARD HOLDER TO STORE OTHER ITEMS SUCH AS TRAVEL PASSES AND PASSPORTS.

FABRIC CARD HOLDER HOW TO...

MATERIALS

- ❑ **One bandana, minimum dimensions 46cm square, or scraps of different colours**
- ❑ **15x11.5cm of heavyweight iron-on fabric stiffener**
- ❑ **30cm square of iron-on interfacing**
- ❑ **15cm of 1mm-wide cord elastic to match your bandana**
- ❑ **Threads to match your bandana**

EQUIPMENT

- ❑ **Scissors**
- ❑ **Iron**
- ❑ **Sewing machine**
- ❑ **Sewing needle and pins**

♥ **STEP ONE** Using an iron, fuse the heavyweight stiffener to the centre of the wrong side of your outer piece, leaving 1cm all the way around. Fuse the interfacing to the centre of the wrong side of each pocket piece, leaving 1cm all the way around.

♥ **STEP TWO** Take the short pocket piece and fold it in half, wrong sides together, so that it now measures 15x7cm and press with an iron. Topstitch along the fold, 3mm from the edge. Do the same with the tall pocket.

♥ **STEP THREE** Lay the lining piece down in front of you right side up. Place the tall pocket piece on top of it so that the raw edges along the bottom align with the raw edges of the bottom of the lining piece. Pin or tack along the bottom edge.

♥ **STEP EIGHT** Place the lining and pocket pieces right side down on top of the outer piece, aligning all the raw edges. The lining piece will be 2cm shorter than the short pocket and the outer pieces at the bottom edge. Pin or tack in position.



♥ **STEP NINE** Sew a 1cm seam along both side edges and the top edge, then reverse stitch at the beginning and end for strength. Trim the seams down to 5mm. Clip the two top corners at 90 degrees.

♥ **STEP TEN** Slip your hand through the open bottom edge, in between the tall and short pocket layers, and turn the work out through this gap. Tease the seams and prod the top two corners from inside to make them sharp before pressing your work with an iron. Pin or tack along the raw bottom edge.

♥ **STEP ELEVEN** Stitch a 1cm hem along the bottom edge, reversing at each end. Clip the two bottom corners, then turn out through the short pocket opening, prodding the two bottom corners from inside the short pocket to make them sharp. Press with a hot iron (avoid ironing the elastic).

♥ **STEP TWELVE** Topstitch just inside all four edges. Score a vertical line up the centre of the pockets – I do this by running the tip of a small knitting needle, or a large tapestry needle, along the edge of a ruler. Stitch along the scored line by machine and finish off all thread ends carefully using a sewing needle.



♥ **STEP FOUR** Stitch a 2cm seam along the bottom edge. Trim the seam to 5mm.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Place the short pocket piece over the tall pocket and lining pieces so that its top edge lies 2.5cm below the top edge of the tall pocket and pin in position.

♥ **STEP SIX** Stitch along both side seams to hold the short pocket in position.

♥ **STEP SEVEN** Lay your outer piece down right side up. Fold your cord elastic in half and position halfway down the left-hand edge, so that its raw ends are projecting just beyond the edge and the loop is lying horizontally across the centre of the fabric.

PREPARING THE PATTERN PIECES

From the bandana cut:

OUTER 17x13cm
INSIDE 17x13cm
TALL POCKET 17x19cm
SHORT POCKET 17x14cm

From the interfacing cut:

TALL POCKET 15x17cm
SHORT POCKET 15x12cm



This project is taken from *Take A Bandana* by Jemima Schlee, published by GMC, www.gmcgroup.com. RRP £12.99



Reloved THREE WAYS

Stools

Stools are often neglected in the corner, left behind in moves and generally ignored, but they are always handy and, with a little work, you can make something special. Here we've got three very different takes from three different designers...

Upcycled steps stool

Project by Amanda Russell and Juliet Bawden from R&B Design (www.randbconsultants.co.uk). Photography by Antonia Attwood

MATERIALS

- ❑ A stool
- ❑ Valspar spray paint in orange
- ❑ Piece of gift wrap, choose one printed on thick paper
- ❑ PVA glue

EQUIPMENT

- ❑ Sandpaper
- ❑ Paintbrush

♥ **STEP ONE** Choose your stool.

♥ **STEP TWO** Sand the metal parts of the stool to remove any flakey bits of paint.

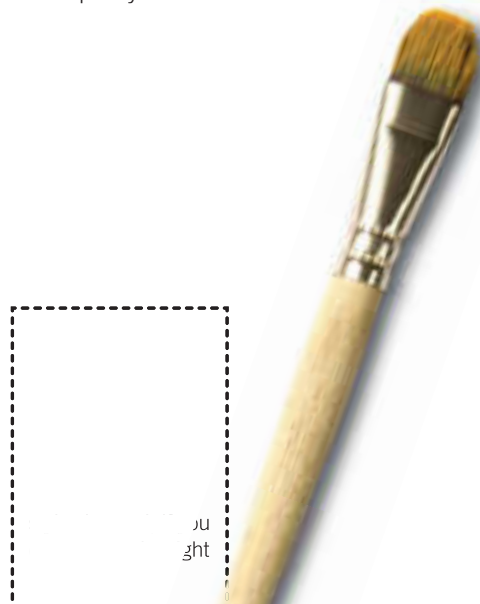
♥ **STEP THREE** Cover the wooden parts of the stool and, in an outdoor space, spray the metal parts of the chair. Leave to dry. Re-spray as necessary.

♥ **STEP FOUR** Choose a piece of substantial wrapping paper. The one we used came from Dulwich Picture Gallery.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Lay the stool on top of the reverse side of the paper and draw round the shape.

♥ **STEP SIX** Stick the paper onto the wooden steps with PVA and leave to dry.

♥ **STEP SEVEN** Water down some PVA and paint a protective coat over the paper. It will look milky to begin with but as it dries will become clear. Repeat with the steps if you have them.



Pick a paper theme in keeping with where the stool will be used. Ours was for the kitchen, but if yours is for the greenhouse, shed or elsewhere, then source a paper design accordingly.



1

Pressed flower stool

Project and photography by Jenny Brownlees

MATERIALS

- ❑ **Stool** (we found ours in a local charity shop for £8)
- ❑ **Primer paint/undercoat and matte emulsion paint in a colour of your choice**
- ❑ **Pritt Stick/clear glue**
- ❑ **A selection of flowers and leaves** (we used about 100 flowers and leaves to cover a large stool)
- ❑ **Clear varnish** (We used one small pot of Homebase Quick Drying Varnish in Clear Gloss)

EQUIPMENT

- ❑ **Scissors**
- ❑ **5cm paintbrush**

♥ **STEP ONE** After finding a wooden stool needing a new lease of life, I embraced the summer and chose to create a pretty addition to my dining room, using pressed flowers.

♥ **STEP TWO** I wanted a clean, fresh base to really make the colourful pressed flowers stand out, so I painted my stool a refreshing white. I used one coat of primer and two coats of matte emulsion. You can of course use any colour of your choice that complements your interior décor.

♥ **STEP THREE** I collected a range of flowers and leaves for my project – it is best to pick flat-backed flowers that are easy to press. Pansies, for example, are perfect, roses and other layered petal flowers will be harder to press flat.

♥ **STEP FOUR** The key to keeping flowers looking fresh is to press them as soon as possible after picking. We cut any leaves and stems from the back of the petal with scissors, ready for pressing.

♥ **STEP FIVE** The ideal way to press is to place flowers and leaves between two heavy books, in a dark room, and leave them for up to a week. If you want a speedier DIY, you can place the flowers in a microwave for 10-20 seconds, to speed up the drying process.

♥ **STEP SIX** I used Pritt Stick sparingly to position my flowers and leaves, a clear adhesive would also work. Avoid PVA as it will spoil and discolour the flowers. You could create a striking pattern with the flowers and



leaves, or place them randomly around the stool as I did.

♥ **STEP SEVEN** Once all your flowers are in place, you can begin sealing them in with the clear adhesive. I did one light coating, left it to dry for 4 hours, then applied a further two coats to ensure the stool could be used without damaging the flowers.

TOP TIP

As the flowers take a few days to press properly, this is a project to plan ahead. Press the flowers first, then hunt down a stool and paint it.

The process of pressing flowers and attaching them to a painted wooden surface, can be applied to other pieces of furniture, so you could match some drawers and shelves to the stool.



Rustic footstool

Project and photography by Jamie Hoover from
Anderson + Grant (www.andersonandgrant.com)

MATERIALS

☐ Old footstool

☐ Twine

EQUIPMENT

☐ Staple gun

☐ Hammer and nails

☐ Glue gun

♥ **STEP ONE** This project was created using a footstool purchased at a consignment shop. It had a dark brown stain on the legs and side boards. Firstly, the finish was sanded off the wood footstool, revealing a beautiful rustic wood underneath.

♥ **STEP TWO** The footstool was taken apart into pieces, so that the twine could be wrapped around the top board.

♥ **STEP THREE** Using an electric stapler, the twine was attached to the edge on the underside of the board and then wrapped in one direction across the entire board. Once it was covered, the other end of the twine was stapled to the underside of the board.

♥ **STEP FOUR** Going in the opposite direction, the twine was weaved in across the footstool. I found that it is easier to do the weaving if you pull a loop of the twine through, rather than piece by piece. This also cuts the weaving in half, since you are weaving two pieces at once. Let the ends hang loose until all the weaving is done, so that the strands of twine can be adjusted and moved. The number of strands you weave and the length of the sections is totally up to you and the size of your footstool. When the board was covered, the ends were stapled in place on the underside of the board.

♥ **STEP FIVE** The legs and side boards were reattached using nails.

♥ **STEP SIX** To finish off the board, a single strand of twine was hot glued around the footstool where the woven board meets the legs and side boards.



3

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Restoring old hardware

MIDWEEK MAKE

Don't throw away old and tarnished metal handles and fixings on your furniture, but rescue, restore and reuse them to create an elegant look by following these simple steps using inexpensive tools.

Project and photography by Clementene Coates (www.clementenecoates.co.uk)

MATERIALS

- ☐ **A couple of clean lint-free cloths**
- ☐ **Mineral spirits** (white spirit)
- ☐ **Black gilding wax** (for example Ebony Rub 'n' Buff)
- ☐ **Gold gilding wax** (for example Gold Leaf Rub 'n' Buff)

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ **Small paintbrush**

♥ **STEP ONE** Clean the hardware first with a little mineral spirits to remove all the grease and grime.

♥ **STEP TWO** Using a paintbrush, apply a little black gilding wax, making sure you get it into the cracks and crevices. (Do this if you want to create an aged patina, alternatively, skip straight to step 3).



♥ **STEP THREE** Remove any excess black gilding wax with a clean cloth and leave it to dry for a few minutes.



♥ **STEP FOUR** With your forefinger (you get the best control using a finger, but feel free to use a cloth instead), lightly rub the raised areas of the handle with a little gold gilding wax.



♥ **STEP FIVE** Again, remove any excess gold gilding wax with a clean cloth and leave it to dry for a few more minutes.

♥ **STEP SIX** Using a clean cloth, gently buff the wax to create a natural, gorgeous sheen. Here's a before and after photo to show you the difference between a handle which hasn't been cleaned and treated to gilding wax and one which has.



TOP TIP

If you want to go for a really eye-catching, bold gold look, apply only the gold gilding wax and use a brush to work it into all the metal's little nooks and crannies.





Chippy rustic finish cabinet



Upcycling old furniture can sometimes be counter intuitive – the best thing to do isn't to try to remove its flaws and blemishes but to introduce a whole lot more! And for this cabinet, it means painting with a wood block...

Project and photography by Justin Power from Pioneer Goods Co. (www.pioneergoodsco.com)

MATERIALS

- ☐ An old piece of furniture
- ☐ Annie Sloan Chalk Paint, in colours of your choice
- ☐ Block of wood, for painting
- ☐ Annie Sloan Clear Wax

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Paintbrushes
- ☐ Sandpaper
- ☐ Clean rag

♥ **STEP ONE** I tried this unorthodox technique on an old mahogany bar cabinet and couldn't be more pleased with the results. To achieve this look, you'll be primarily painting with a block of wood (something I'd never done before), save for the first coat of French Linen, which I applied with a brush.

♥ **STEP TWO** From there, your small block of scrap wood will serve as your paintbrush. The reason we use a block of wood, is that it is impossible for it to apply the paint evenly, which works in our favour in this case. I wanted to use contrasting colours to really make each layer of paint stand out. For the second coat we used Duck Egg Blue.



♥ **STEP THREE** For the third coat, I applied Antibes Green using the block seen below. I found it was easier to pour the paint onto a plate first, but any flat-bottomed surface that holds paint will do.



♥ **STEP FOUR** After the first three coats the piece looks like a bit of a mess, and not in a good way. This is fine, because we still have a way to go. To try and bring it back and tie it all together, I wanted a top coat of grey. For this, I mixed equal parts French Linen and Old White and applied with my block for the final coat.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Due to the texture that built up from the many layers of paint, I wanted to sand it down using 600-grit sandpaper to make it smooth to the touch.

♥ **STEP SIX** From there I applied Annie's clear wax followed by dark wax and the result is as you see here.

TOP TIP

If you're not sure about using this technique or what paint colours to use, then experiment on a piece of scrap wood with a similar colour and texture to the item of furniture you're looking to work on.



TWO-CHAIR BENCH

Take two chairs and turn them into one bench. Use identical chairs or make your bench quirkier with two different designs.

By Hester van Overbeek



GET CREATIVE WITH DIFFERENT PAINT COLOURS — I WENT FOR AN OMBRÉ EFFECT AND USED THREE SHADES OF BLUE.

TWO-CHAIR BENCH HOW TO...

MATERIALS

- ❑ 2 dining chairs
- ❑ Smooth planed wood, 34x18mm for the frame
- ❑ Thicker wood, for making the seat and backrest
- ❑ 4 corner brackets
- ❑ Screws
- ❑ Quick-drying filler

EQUIPMENT

- ❑ Electric drill
- ❑ Saw
- ❑ Measuring tape
- ❑ Sandpaper
- ❑ Screwdriver
- ❑ C clamp
- ❑ Filler knife
- ❑ Paint and paintbrush

DISMANTLING THE OLD CHAIRS

♥ **STEP ONE** Select two chairs that are either the same style or have their seats at the same height. If possible, remove the seat pad – if you turn the chair upside down, you will see the screws holding it in place.

♥ **STEP TWO** You only need to use the backs of the chairs, so you have to take them apart. If using modern chairs, you might be able to unscrew the backs. However, for older chairs, such as the ones shown here, use a saw and carefully cut through the side seat supports.



♥ **STEP THREE** Also saw through any lower supports between the front and back legs. You might have to use gentle force to get the chair apart, but be careful not to break it.

BUILDING THE NEW SEAT

♥ **STEP FOUR** Measure the width of your chair and decide on the dimensions of your bench. The depth of the bench seat is determined by the width of the chair back. The chairs I used are 37cm wide and I wanted my bench to be 85cm long.



♥ **STEP FIVE** To build the frame of the bench, measure and cut four pieces of smooth planed wood. You will need two pieces measuring the width of your chair and two the desired length. For my bench, that is two 37cm pieces and two 85cm pieces. Sand the rough edges once cut.

♥ **STEP SIX** Join the frame using the four corner brackets, making sure all the corners are right angles.



♥ **STEP SEVEN** Attach the frame securely to the chair backs, holding it in position with a C clamp while you use the screwdriver. Don't place the screws all in a straight line – alternating them up and down a little means there is less chance of the timber splitting.



♥ **STEP EIGHT** Attach the frame to the second chair back in exactly the same way.

♥ **STEP NINE** For the seat, you can use wood of varying widths, but it must be of the same thickness. I like to use whatever I have left over from other projects, so, as you can see, my pieces of wood are all different.



This project is taken from *Furniture Hacks* by Hester van Overbeek, photography by James Gardiner, published by CICO Books. RRP £14.99

TOP TIP

Don't throw away the offcut pieces of wood from the chairs, as they may be suitable as the supporting pieces underneath the bench seat.

♥ **STEP TEN** The front and back pieces of wood will probably each need a little square cut out at the corner to allow them to fit snugly to the chair backs. Measure, mark and saw the square out.



♥ **STEP ELEVEN** Measure and cut more wood to length until you have filled the frame.



♥ **STEP TWELVE** To attach the wood to the frame, pre-drill holes in the wood, slightly bigger than the screws you will use. This means the screws disappear once screwed in, giving a smoother finish. Screw the wood to the short and long sides of your frame.



FINISHING AND PAINTING

♥ **STEP THIRTEEN** To make the seating a little stronger, add two supporting pieces of wood under the seating. Measure precisely so the wood fits snugly, cut to size and fix in place by drilling a hole slightly larger than the screw and screw in place.



♥ **STEP FOURTEEN** Attach the backrest. Measure how long your wood needs to be and cut to size. I added two backrests using wood of different widths. Screw into the backs of the chairs using wood screws.



♥ **STEP FIFTEEN** Fill all the drilled holes and other cracks or damaged areas with filler, using a filling knife. Allow to dry, then smooth down with sandpaper.

♥ **STEP SIXTEEN** Also sand the original chair backs – the smoother they are, the easier it will be to paint the bench.

♥ **STEP SEVENTEEN** Your bench is now ready to be painted – I gave mine an all-over coat of white. Apply a second and maybe even a

third coat of paint, depending on how dark your wood is. Allow the paint to dry thoroughly between coats.



♥ **STEP EIGHTEEN** You can leave your bench one colour or get creative with multiple colours, an ombré effect or stripes. I painted the sides three shades of blue, from dark to light. To tie in the backrest, I painted the top of the wood two shades of blue, as I thought the whole backrest in blue would have looked a bit too heavy. Let the paint dry, then sit back and relax.





Waterproof outdoor cushion

HOME REFURB

Recycle a bag to make waterproof cushions, the perfect thing for a festival. These fantastic cushions are made by recycling waterproof bags, the sort you buy in supermarkets or that are given free at flower shows.

Project by Amanda Russell and Juliet Bawden from R&B Design (www.randbconsultants.co.uk). Photography by Antonia Attwood

MATERIALS

- ☐ A bag
- ☐ Velcro
- ☐ Thread

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ An unpicker
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Sewing machine

♥ **STEP ONE** Remove the binding from the outer edge of the bag.



♥ **STEP TWO** Remove the sides of the bag and discard them.

♥ **STEP THREE** Remove the handles.



♥ **STEP FOUR** Open up the handles and discard the tube in the middle.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Cut off the base of the bag.

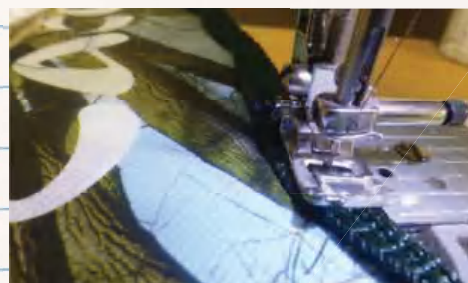
♥ **STEP SIX** With right sides facing, sew the two sides of the bag together along the bottom seam.

♥ **STEP SEVEN** On the wrong side, pin Velcro along both top edges of the fabric oblongs.



♥ **STEP EIGHT** Sew the Velcro in place.

♥ **STEP NINE** With right sides facing out, sew the two sides of the cushion together and then cover the side seams with the bias made from the old handles to either side of the bag.



♥ **STEP TEN** Fill your cushion either with clothes if you are camping, an old pillow or any foam or other padded material that you can get your hands on.

TOP TIP

The cushions made here are from bags by Cacoon and they're made from old cola bottles. Visit www.cacoonworld.com to see their range of hanging nests for relaxing in.





LEATHER NOTEBOOK

Notebooks are easy to make in a short space of time. Cover them with a transformed leather bag, and you've got a truly desirable piece of stationery!

Project and photography by Hester van Overbeek from Hester's Handmade Home (www.hestershandmadehome.com)

WE CAN TAKE NOTES ON SMART PHONES, BUT, FOR ME, A REAL PEN IS BEST FOR COMING UP WITH NEW IDEAS AND CRAFT PROJECTS.

LEATHER NOTEBOOK HOW TO...

MATERIALS

- ☐ An old leather bag
- ☐ Contrasting cotton fabric
- ☐ Thick card stock or an empty cereal box
- ☐ PVA glue
- ☐ Strong thread
- ☐ Paper, for the notebook

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Sizzix® Big Shot™ Plus Machine (660020)
- ☐ Sizzix® Bigz™ Sassy Serif die, in the letter of your choice (Letter H 654723)
- ☐ Needle

♥ **STEP ONE** You need an old bag. I used an old clutch, but any bag will do. The bigger the bag the bigger you can make your notebook.

♥ **STEP TWO** Take the bag apart so you are left with a big rectangular leather piece. Fold the short sides over by 2cm.

♥ **STEP THREE** If your bag has a lining, cut this away. I used a hem picker for this.

♥ **STEP FOUR** Decide where your letter will be cut out of the leather. I made a sample letter out of paper and placed it on the bag to see where it would look best.



♥ **STEP FIVE** Sandwich the leather and die between the two plastic sheets and run it through the Sizzix® machine.

♥ **STEP SIX** Cut a piece of card so it fits inside the leather.

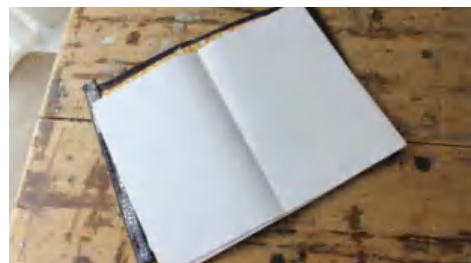
♥ **STEP SEVEN** Cover both sides of the card with fabric and glue together.

♥ **STEP EIGHT** Glue the card to the inside of the leather. Apply glue around the letter cut-out, but make sure you don't put glue where the contrasting fabric will show. Glue the folded sides to the fabric/card lining.



♥ **STEP NINE** Let the glue dry. It might help to put some heavy books on the leather to make sure it adheres correctly.

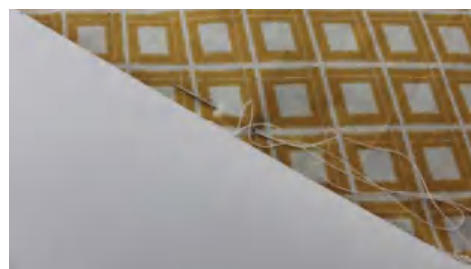
♥ **STEP TEN** Decide how thick you want your notebook to be and cut your paper to fit inside it.



♥ **STEP ELEVEN** Thread your needle, double the thread and make a knot in the end. You are going to sew your paper on three points: 2cm from the top, 2cm from the bottom and in the middle. Start at the bottom, push your needle through the paper, go back down again 1cm higher and push the needle through the knotted end of the thread.



♥ **STEP TWELVE** Sew the paper to the fabric lining, making sure it's secure. Finish off and cut your thread. Repeat steps 11 and 12 on the middle and top of the paper.



TOP TIP

If you don't have an old leather project sho work with a material, li that is a sir thickness a flexibility to



Square armchair cover

A modern square armchair gets an update with this glamorous, easy-to-fit slipcover. A linear graphic printed fabric emphasizes the armchair's geometric lines. The seat and back cushions make it super-comfy to sit on.

By DK Publishing

Square armchair cover

MATERIALS

- ☐ 7.5m fabric
- ☐ Matching thread
- ☐ Roll zip
- ☐ Velcro fastening strip

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Calico
- ☐ Tape measure
- ☐ Extra-long pins
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Ruler
- ☐ Sewing machine

MAKING THE CALICO PATTERN

♥ **STEP ONE** Measure the back of the chair to find the centre point, then mark the centre of the inside back with a line of pins.

♥ **STEP TWO** Place the selvedge of a large piece of calico along the line of pins and smooth it flat.



♥ **STEP THREE** Tuck the calico into the inside arm and seat back creases, cutting off the excess fabric so the calico lies flat.



♥ **STEP FOUR** Follow the existing seams to draw the inside arm and seat back seam lines. Cut off the excess fabric along the lines. Mark an arrow for the vertical grain line as a guide when cutting the main fabric.



♥ **STEP FIVE** Place a second piece of calico along the inside arm. Smooth it and tuck it into the creases. Draw in the seam lines and trim the excess. Mark a notch as shown.



♥ **STEP SIX** Take note of where the inside arm and inside back pattern pieces meet and mark these points with notches.



♥ **STEP SEVEN** Follow the existing seam lines to measure all the right-angled pieces – the outside arm, outside back, seat (including its front edge), and arm band (see diagram opposite). Measure at least two points across the widths and lengths to allow for variations. Since the chair is symmetrical, you only need to measure each piece once. Make a note of the measurement for each piece.

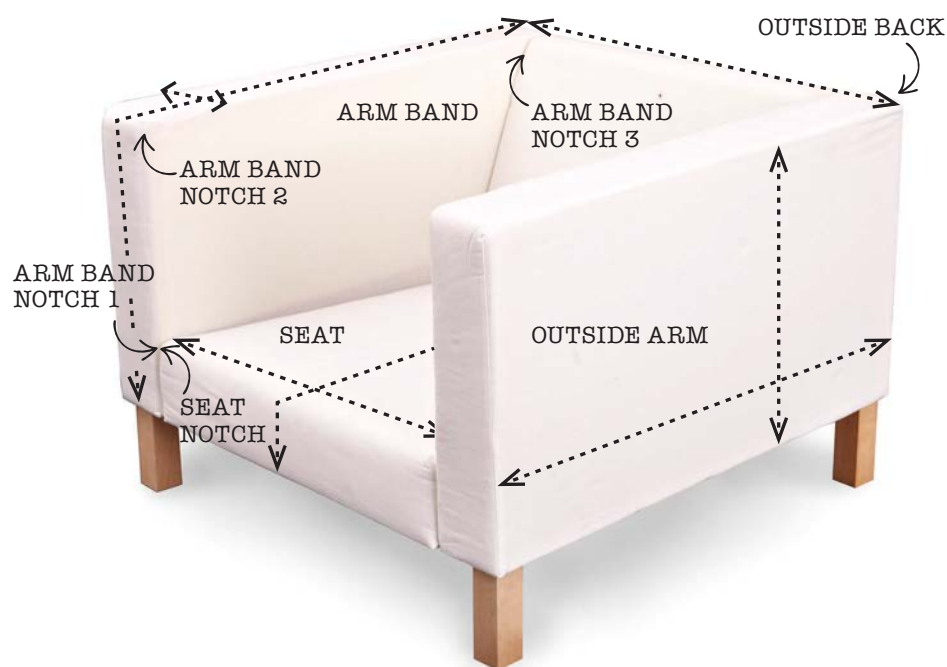


BEFORE YOU START

When making a slipcover for an armchair or sofa that has rectangular arms, you don't need to make a full calico pattern. Any right-angled pieces can simply be measured and cut from fabric. However, you will need to make a calico pattern for any irregular angles. Start by identifying them on your chair. Make a calico pattern for those pieces, then measure the others. In this example (see below) you will need to make a pattern for the inside arms and back because of the irregular angle.



When you buy the fabric for your armchair, check the laundry instructions, so that you can attach a label to your finished cover.



checking the pattern of the fabric to ensure that the second inside arm piece is a mirror image of the first.



♥ **STEP FOUR** To cut two outside arms, one outside back, one seat and two arm bands, use the measurements in your list to plot the pieces on the main fabric, paying attention to the positioning of the pattern of the fabric. For each piece, square off the fabric. Add hem and seam allowances, and notches according to your list. Label all the pieces and neaten the edges.



♥ **STEP EIGHT** Add 8cm to the bottom edge of the seat, the outside arm and the outside back, to allow for a double hem of 2.5cm. Add a 1.5cm seam allowance to all the other measurements. Measure where you need to mark notches following the photograph and directions above and add these measurements to your list. You will eventually mark dots at all corners to indicate where seams will start and finish.

CUTTING THE PIECES

♥ **STEP ONE** Look for any vertical or horizontal pattern in the fabric. Decide which part of the pattern would work best centred along the midline of the chair. This will guide the placement of the pattern for all pieces that cross the midline.



♥ **STEP TWO** Start by cutting out the inside back. Fold the fabric right sides together, so the part of the pattern you have chosen to be the midline is on the fold. Lay the inside back pattern piece along the fold and draw a 1.5cm seam allowance along the three sides not on the fold. Transfer the notch marked in step 6 to the fabric. Mark dots on the fabric at the corners of the pattern piece, then remove the pattern piece.



♥ **STEP THREE** For the inside arms, lay a single thickness of main fabric face down with the inside arm pattern piece on top. Draw a 1.5cm seam allowance along all four sides and mark dots on the fabric at all the corners. Cut out. For the other inside arm piece, flip the calico pattern and repeat,

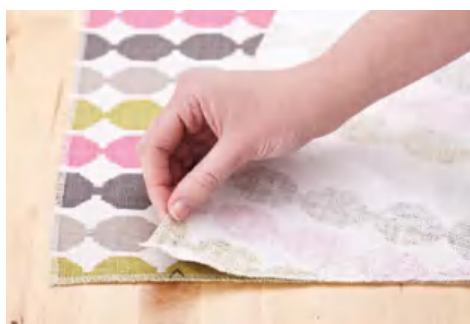
This masterclass is taken from *Handmade Interiors*, published by DK Publishing. **RRP £20**



Square armchair cover (cont).

ASSEMBLING THE SLIPCOVER

♥ **STEP ONE** Place one inside arm and the inside back right sides together, matching the notch on the inside back with the dot at the top corner of the inside arm. Pin. Machine stitch with a 1.5cm seam allowance, stopping at the dots in order not to stitch into the seam allowance.



♥ **STEP TWO** Pin the other inside arm to the inside back in the same way. Pin and machine stitch together.

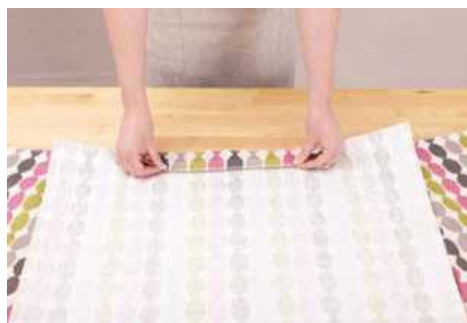
♥ **STEP THREE** Lay the joined pieces on the chair to check that the seams line up with the existing seam lines of the chair.



♥ **STEP FOUR** Snip the seam allowance at the notches on both sides of the inside back, stopping just short of the stitching line. This releases the tension in the seam allowance.



♥ **STEP FIVE** With right sides together, align the back of the seat with the bottom edge of the inside back, matching the pattern exactly.



♥ **STEP SIX** Pin together. With right sides together, align the bottom edge of an inside arm with the corresponding side edge of the seat, pivoting around the right-angled corner of the seat. Pin together.



♥ **STEP SEVEN** Pin the bottom edge of the other inside arm to the seat in the same way. Stitch around all three sides of the seat with a 1.5cm seam allowance, stopping at the dots in order not to stitch into the seam allowance. Press the seam open.



♥ **STEP EIGHT** Lay the joined pieces on the chair to check the fit. Put to one side.

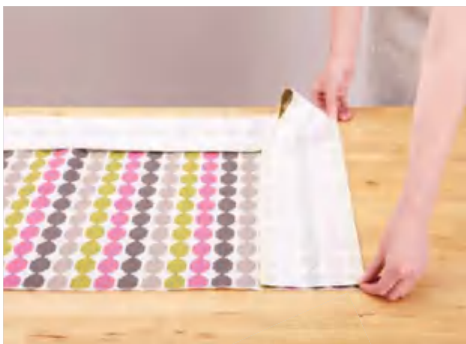


Your armchair fabric should fit in with the rest of the room design, so consider creating a complementary curtain pattern (see page 43).

♥ **STEP NINE** With right sides together, align the top edge of an outside arm with a long edge of the corresponding arm band. Match the middle notch in the arm band with the seam allowance at the front edge of the outside arm. Clip through the notch.

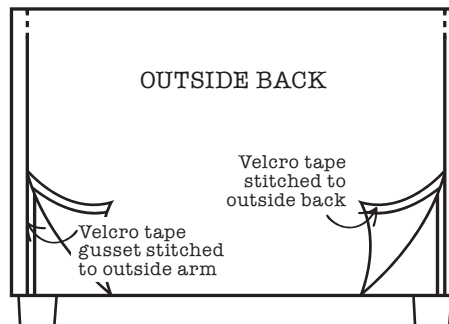


♥ **STEP TEN** Pivot the band 90 degrees at the notch to match the edge of the band with the front edge of the outside arm. Pin and stitch in place with a 1.5cm seam allowance. Press the seam open. Repeat to join the other arm band to the other outside arm.



ATTACHING THE OUTSIDE BACK

♥ **STEP ELEVEN** The outside back attaches to the inside back at the top edge. The cover is held on with Velcro tape down each side and the edges above the Velcro are joined to the corresponding edges of the outside arms.



♥ **STEP TWELVE** For the Velcro tape gussets, cut two strips of fabric, each 7cm wide and 10cm less than the height of the outside arm. Fold each strip right sides together lengthwise and pin. Machine stitch along both pairs of short sides with a 1.5cm seam allowance.



♥ **STEP THIRTEEN** Trim off the seam allowance at the short sides and turn the strip right side out. Stitch the long sides together from the right side and neaten the edges. Cut a piece of Velcro tape to the length of the strip. With the right side of the strip uppermost, lay the hooked side of the Velcro tape on top. Stitch in place.

♥ **STEP FOURTEEN** Measure 5cm from the bottom of the back edge of an outside arm and mark with a pin. With its Velcro side facing down, align the strip with the pin, with its long edge matching the back edge of the outside arm. Pin and stitch from top to bottom within a 1.5cm seam allowance. Repeat Steps 12 and 13 for the other outside arm.

♥ **STEP FIFTEEN** With right sides together and starting from the back edge, match the notch on the arm band with the seam that joins the inside arm to the inside back. Ensuring the seam is open, pin in place.



♥ **STEP SIXTEEN** Continue pinning along the long edge. Match the notch on the arm band with the dot on the corner of the inside arm piece. Clip through the notch as before. Stitch with a 1.5cm seam allowance.



♥ **STEP SEVENTEEN** With right sides together, pin the front edge of the inside arm and of the seat to the front edge of the arm band. Stitch with a 1.5cm seam allowance.



♥ **STEP EIGHTEEN** With the outside back face down, fold back and press a 1.5cm seam

Square armchair cover (cont).

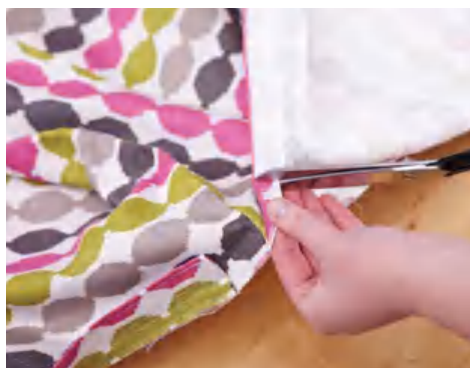
allowance along one side. Measure 5cm from the top and bottom and mark with pins. Pin the looped side of the Velcro tape within the markers. Stitch in place from top to bottom. Repeat on the other side of the outside back.



♥ **STEP NINETEEN** With right sides together and matching the pattern exactly, align the top edge of the outside back with the top edge of the inside back, including the edge of the arm bands. Pin and stitch within the seam allowance.



♥ **STEP TWENTY** Snip across the seam allowance at the top of each Velcro strip on the outside back.



♥ **STEP TWENTY ONE** With right sides together, pin and stitch the edges above the Velcro to the corresponding edges of the outside arms. Backstitch at the beginning and the end.



♥ **STEP TWENTY TWO** Check the fit of the armchair cover.



♥ **STEP TWENTY THREE** With the chair cover face down, turn up 2.5cm all around the bottom edge and press. Turn up another 2.5cm to make a double hem. Use stitch length 3 to machine the hem in place. Press to set the stitches.



The geometric pattern has a retro feel and looks great when partnered by other furniture and decorations inspired by the 1960s and 1970s.



Square armchair cover (cont).

SEAT BACK CUSHION COVER

The technique used for making this cushion cover is useful when dealing with an irregular shape, such as the trapezium shape of the back cushion. The technique can be used for other irregular shapes.

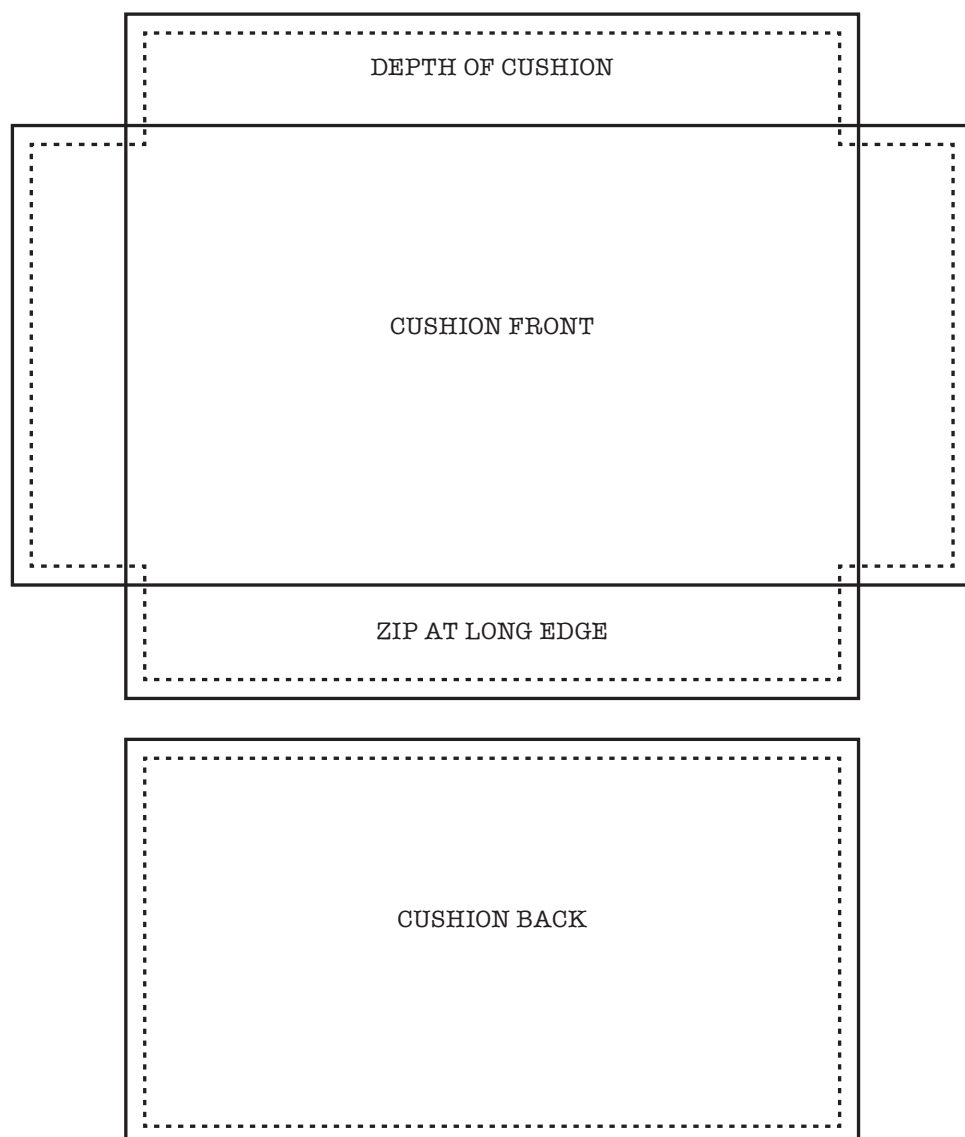
The front and sides of the cushion cover are cut in one cross-shaped piece that is joined at the corners. The back has seams along all four sides to join it to the front and sides. There is a zip along one of the long seams that joins the front to the back; it cannot be seen when the cushion is in place since it is at the back of the chair.

CUSHION COVER PIECES

Make sure the pattern is centred on both front and back pieces before cutting and that they match the pattern on the chair.

CUSHION BACK Measure the cushion back and add a seam allowance all around. Cut it out.

CUSHION FRONT The front and sides are cut as one piece. Measure the depth of the cushion pad. Add this measurement to each side of the cushion front as shown. Add a 1.5cm seam allowance to all the outside edges and cut out. Neaten the edges of both pieces.



♥ **STEP ONE** To mark the correct placement of the zip, lay the back of the cushion cover on top of the front, with right sides facing and making sure that the pattern is matching. Manoeuvre the back so that its sides align with the seam allowance of the front as shown. At both sides, measure 7.5cm along the front and 6.5cm along the back. Mark with pins.



♥ **STEP TWO** Cut a piece of zip from the roll to the width of the cushion back. Insert the zip pull and open the zip almost to the end. Place one side of the zip, face down, between the markers on the front, with the teeth of the zip 1.5cm from the raw edge. Pin in place. Fold back and pin the excess tape. Stitch in place, then close the zip.



♥ **STEP THREE** With right sides facing, lay the back on the front and align the other side of the zip between the markers on the back. Pin as before. Open the zip and stitch between the markers.



Make sure you get fabric that's suitable as a chair and cushion cover, it needs to be hardwearing, washable and fire resistant.

♥ **STEP FOUR** With right sides together, bring the two short edges of the cushion side together at each corner of the front, and pin. Stitch with a 1.5cm seam allowance. Repeat at each corner.



♥ **STEP FIVE** With right sides together, lay the front on the back. Match the corners, placing the seam allowance of the sides to the corners of the bottom so that you get a little square at each corner, as shown. Pin the corners in place first, then pin all the way round to join the sides to the back.



♥ **STEP SIX** Starting at one end of the zip and with the zip behind the foot, stitch with a 1.5cm seam allowance towards the nearest corner. Backstitch at the start to secure in place.

♥ **STEP SEVEN** Pivot at the corner. Continue stitching, pivoting at each corner, to the other end of the zip. Backstitch at the end. Turn the cushion to the right side and insert the cushion pad.



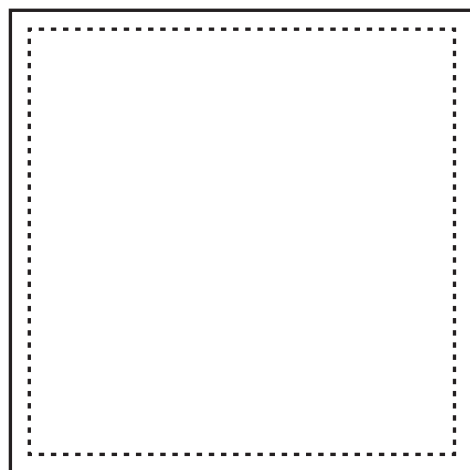
Square armchair cover (cont).

CALCULATE THE CUTTING SIZES

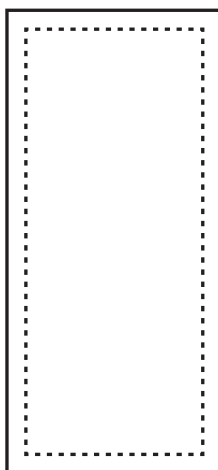
Use the width (W), depth (D), and height (H) of the seat pad to calculate the sizes of the fabric pieces you must cut. Add seam allowances as below. Make a note of these measurements.

SIDE BAND

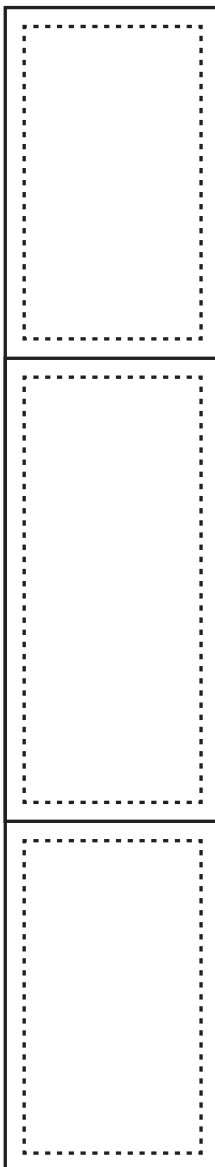
Overall length =
Perimeter – zip band
(+ difference) + seam
allowances $H + 3\text{cm}$



SEAT X 2
 $W + 3\text{cm}$
 $D + 3\text{cm}$



ZIP BAND X 2
 $W + 20\text{cm} + 3\text{cm}$
 $\frac{1}{2} H + 3\text{cm}$



SEAT CUSHION COVER

♥ **STEP ONE** Cut out the pieces according to the diagram, making sure that the pattern on the top of the seat cover and the front of the side band line up with that of the seat back cushion cover. Neaten the edges. With the zip band pieces face down, fold back and press a 1.5cm seam allowance along one long edge of each.



♥ **STEP TWO** Cut a piece of zip from the roll, slightly longer than the zip band, and attach a zip pull. Open out the seam allowance of one zip band. With the zip face down and open, align the teeth of one side with the fold line. Pin in place, then stitch.



♥ **STEP THREE** Lay the other zip band right side up and open out the seam allowance as before. With right sides together, place the zip band with the attached zip on top. Pin the other side of the zip to the second band, aligning the teeth with the fold line. Pin and stitch in place as close to the teeth as possible, while making sure to leave room for the zip to open.



TOP AND BOTTOM OF SEAT

Cut two. Use the width and depth measurements of the seat pad and add 3cm to each, giving you a 1.5cm seam allowance along each side.

ZIP BANDS

Cut two. The zip bands sit either side of the zip at the back of the cushion and should extend about 10cm around each side. Their length is $W + 20\text{cm} + 3\text{cm}$ seam allowance, and their width is $\frac{1}{2} H + 3\text{cm}$ seam allowance.

SIDE BAND

The side band wraps around the front and sides of the cushion. Depending on the width of your fabric, you will almost certainly have to make it in three pieces – one long and two short. To calculate the length of the short pieces, measure the perimeter of the cushion pad. Subtract the length of the zip band. If the difference is more than the width of the fabric, you will need to add the difference as two pieces of equal length. Each piece of the band also needs 1.5cm seam allowance at either end.

It may seem fiddly to do all the pattern matching, but it's well worth it to give your armchair the best possible appearance.

♥ **STEP FOUR** To assemble the side band, with right sides together, align each short piece with a short edge of the long piece. The short pieces will not be visible when the seat cushion is in place.



♥ **STEP FIVE** Pin at each end and stitch in place with a 1.5cm seam allowance. Press the seams open.

♥ **STEP SIX** To join the side band to the assembled zip band, with right sides together, place one short edge of the side band to one short edge of the zip band.



♥ **STEP SEVEN** Pin along the short edge and stitch together with a 1.5cm seam allowance. Repeat at the other end to create a continuous band. Press the seams open.



♥ **STEP EIGHT** With the seams aligned at both ends of the zip, fold the band in half crossways. Mark the halfway points on each long edge of the zip band with pins.

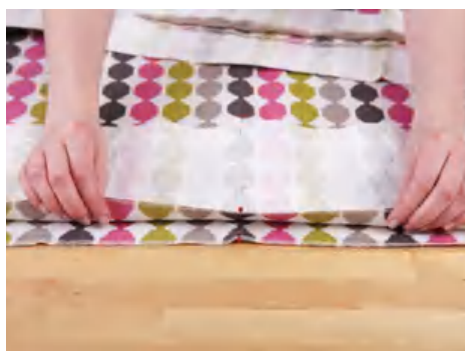


♥ **STEP NINE** Mark the corresponding halfway points top and bottom on the long piece of the side band. Fold the band in half again. Mark the quarter points.



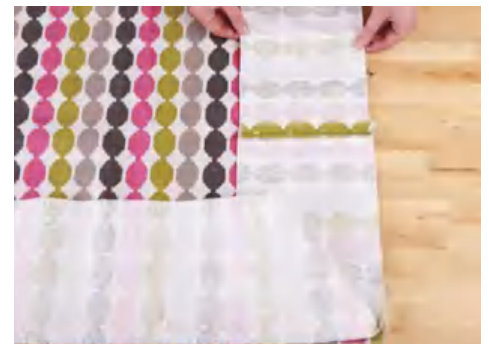
♥ **STEP TEN** Fold the top and bottom of the seat cover in the same way to mark their half and quarter points.

♥ **STEP ELEVEN** With right sides together, match the halfway pin on the long piece of the band to the halfway pin at the front edge of the top of the seat cover. Then match the pattern on the band to the pattern on the top.



♥ **STEP TWELVE** Pin along the front edge, taking care that the pattern matches all the way along. Use plenty of pins to hold the pattern in place.

♥ **STEP THIRTEEN** Match the quarter pins and the remaining halfway pin, then pin along the three sides, easing in any excess fabric as you go.



♥ **STEP FOURTEEN** Starting at the front, sew with a 1.5cm seam allowance. Check that the pattern matches and adjust if needed. Clip into the seam allowance at the corners so the fabric lies flat.

♥ **STEP FIFTEEN** Open the zip. Attach the band to the bottom of the seat cover in the same way. Take care to align the corners at the same points.



♥ **STEP SIXTEEN** Turn the cover inside out and insert the cushion pad. Put the slipcover over the chair and add the cushions.

TOP TIP

Make extra sets of covers from different fabrics, so you can change them whenever you feel like it.

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SALVAGE SISTER COLUMN

SEPTEMBER 2015

Charis Williams

This month TV presenter, reuse expert and Salvage Sister Charis Williams joins us as our new monthly upcycling expert. She kicks things off by making a portable pallet bar and solves one reader's coffee bag dilemma...

A big hello to all my Salvage Sisters and Mr's, you repurposing addicts and creative junkies!

I'm going to be here every month from now on as your go-to-gal if you come up against a repurposing issue or need advice on anything upcycling – from deconstruction, paints and methods, to tools and fixings, just get in touch with me via Facebook, Twitter or Instagram (details below right), and let me know what your problem is (don't forget to leave your name, location and send a photo if you have one). I will do my very best to help! I'll choose one question a month that goes to print with your answer right here.

You're also going to get a little sneak peek behind the scenes into the weird and wonderful world of the Williams! I've heard it said many times that I'm not your average woman – I've always been a tomboy, I love my power tools and I absolutely adore making quirky and unusual items out of 'trash'.

For me, there's nothing better than saving the planet and saving some cash, and I get to do this while letting my imagination run wild and being creative too!! Sold!

If you're like me, you'll no doubt find inspiration everywhere. Sometimes even I'm not sure where my wacky ideas come from! This month I was lured to the Beach House Cafe & Bar in Worthing. To be honest it didn't take much luring, they just mentioned good coffee and a pallet build – I was there with bells on!

On arrival, Tim (one of the owners) gave me my brief – to build a mobile bar out of pallets. That was it. I asked lots of questions about how it was going to be transported, what ground it was to be used on, how big they needed it etc. The reply to most of these questions was, "Not sure, but we trust your judgement." I just love it when a client takes the leash off!

I decided the best way to make a mobile bar was to have it fold up for transportation, and it needed to fit on or in a car. It could have its own wheels too, and that would make it easy to move by even the tinniest of bar staff!

I wanted the bar top to be made from reclaimed scaffold boards because they're awesome. So, that decided, I spent the rest of

my day thinking about hinges and how to make the bar solid and robust whilst keeping it easily mobile. I popped down to my local wood store in Brighton for inspiration and a measure up. I knew I needed three pallets of the same variety and size to make each section of the bar. I also know (from building my workshop frame out of pallets) how many different types of pallets there are. When I found these babies I knew I could cut one down into three sections to build the entire bar, then fill in the slats with more pallet wood.

This is what I love about upcycling – coming up with an idea and then problem solving. For me, the end piece has to be what the client envisaged, it has to tick all the boxes they need ticked. And it has to tick the boxes I need ticked too – 1 It looks super cool. 2 It's saving materials from landfill. 3 It will last a lifetime. 4 It's safe.

All this and just one week to complete. I don't make life easy! Here you can see the bar finished. A few 12 hour days in there... and more than a few splinters, but well worth it. To see my projects unfold as they happen and see what else I'm into, find me on the methods below, and don't forget to send me those upcycling problems! Until next month my crazy compulsive upcycling army!

Facebook – Charis Williams AKA The Salvage Sister

Twitter – @CharisWilliams

Instagram – @CharisWilliams777

YouTube – TheCharis777

www.salvagesister.co.uk

UPCYCLING SOS

♥ So, I have these gorgeous coffee burlap bags that I want to make beanbags out of. Problem is they smell like a damp cellar! I've washed them and left them outside to dry for a couple of days, but they still stink. Got any tips for me? Thanks.

Trine from Norway (Instagram)

Hello Trine, how's Norway this time of year?

The answer you're looking for is bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)!

You need to mix it with water and let the coffee bags soak in this mixture for a few hours for an unyielding stink. Then put the bags on a wash cycle with some normal detergent.

I would use half a cup of bicarbonate of soda in a washing up bowl, or two or more cups if you're soaking them in a bath tub. If you don't have bicarbonate of soda you can use white vinegar with water instead. Use enough water to cover the sacks and throw in two cups of white vinegar (for a washing up bowl). Let soak for up to 48 hours (depending on the stink), then wash normally. The vinegar smell should dissipate on air drying. Let me know how you get on!





Frottage aged table top



Frottage is a technique of rubbing to create an aged-look with paint and it works well with Annie Sloan's Chalk Paint. Using just some newspaper and some elbow grease you can transform a table top in minutes.

Project and photography by Annie Sloan (www.anniesloan.com)

MATERIALS

- ☐ **Wooden furniture piece, we used a table top**
- ☐ **Annie Sloan Chalk Paint™ in three different colours**
- ☐ **Annie Sloan Clear Wax**

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ **Newspaper**
- ☐ **Clean cloth**
- ☐ **Paintbrushes**

♥ **STEP ONE** Choose one Chalk Paint™ colour as a base – we used Aubusson Blue.

♥ **STEP TWO** Then choose two Chalk Paint™ colours to create the aged look – we used Scandinavian Pink and Cream.

♥ **STEP THREE** When the base coat is dry, apply a second add-on colour of thin, diluted paint over the surface – use enough water for it to drip slightly. Before this dries, lay a newspaper over the surface and rub it down with your hands then lift it off – et voilà, the aged-look process has begun.

♥ **STEP FOUR** When the second add-on colour is dry, add the third diluted colour, following the process as above. This technique removes each layer of paint unevenly to create the age-worn effect.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Finally, add Annie Sloan Clear Wax to seal the surface.

ANNIE SLOAN SAYS

"Frottage is one of my favourite paint effect techniques, as it brings a bolder and more distinctive ageing process to any surface – in an instant! You often see this look in Swedish country interiors, I think partly because of the old textured paints that have long been in these wooden interiors, and partly because of the way it is allowed to peel off over time."





Karen Donnelly

Furniture usually only gets painted in one or two colours, so Karen's talent for painting stunning landscapes in Chalk Paint on anything from armoires to a chest of drawers, is why she's this month's Annie Sloan Painter in Residence.

Karen has a studio in Tinton Falls, New Jersey and it's here that she creates the extraordinary artworks on pieces of furniture she's hunted down to upcycle. Her paintings are impressive enough on canvas, but to see such stunning pictures created on wood, using Annie Sloan's Chalk Paint, explains why Karen is one of Annie's Painters in Residence this year. We spoke to Karen to find out more about how she creates her art...

♥ When and how did you first become interested in painting?

My mother is an artist, so from the time I was very young we were always having fun painting, drawing and sculpting. My mother always encouraged my siblings and I to be creative.

♥ What led you to become an artist?

I always enjoyed drawing and painting. I loved taking art in school and felt being an artist was my calling. Art history always interested me.

♥ Where did you train?

In addition to my mother sparking my interest in art, I went to Moore College of Art and Design in Philadelphia. I always loved to draw people and do portraits, so I majored in Fashion Illustration.

♥ What style of painting do you prefer?

I love impressionist painting. I like to paint my landscapes in a simpler, looser style. For more detailed painting, I love transparent watercolour painting.

♥ How do you find the experience of painting on furniture?

I love the feeling of painting on wood and transforming it. When I add a painted scene to a piece of furniture, it further tells a story.

♥ How does it differ from painting onto a normal canvas?

By using different techniques you're in control of creating a super smooth or a textured surface. The furniture shape (table, dresser, chair) dictates the layout possibilities of your art.



♥ **What would your top tips be for anyone wanting to try this at home?**

Take a workshop and get 'hands on' experience with the basic techniques of painting and waxing with Chalk Paint™. Plan out your colours by looking at the relationship of how the painted piece will work in the room. Do a quick colour painted sketch of the colours you would like to use. Don't be afraid to experiment or make a mistake – you can always paint over and modify your work.

♥ **Does the furniture impact what design you choose to paint?**

Yes, most definitely. A tall chest of drawers lends itself to a vertical format landscape, not a horizontal one. I often move the hardware pulls and handles so that they don't detract from the artwork.

♥ **What's your favourite thing about using Chalk Paint? How does it differ from using other types of paint?**

I love the fact that I can start painting directly on a piece of furniture without sanding or priming. I love Annie's colours. They are beautiful and organic. They blend easily to make other colours. You can layer the paint to be thick or apply it thinly like a wash. I love the fact that Chalk Paint is water based, so you can clean up and wash your brushes easily. Also, it has a quick drying time.

♥ **How do you mix new colours?**

I start by slowly blending one colour to the other, adjusting as I go. To lighten a colour, I add old white or pure white.

♥ **Where do you get your inspiration?**

When I travel near or far, I always take photos of little scenes that interest me. Sometimes it's the subject that captures my attention, or the colours, sunlight and shadows. I love to go to art museums to get inspired.

♥ **How did you become one of Annie's Painters in Residence?**

I was lucky enough to meet Annie five years ago when she came to the United States and my sister, Patty Seaman, became one of the first three Annie Sloan Chalk Paint stockists here in the US.

I love painting in watercolours and oils, but I experimented with Chalk Paint as a fine art paint and I loved the results. Annie saw a few of my Chalk Paint landscape paintings and asked me to be a part of the Painters in Residence program. I happily accepted and couldn't wait to get started!

♥ **What plans do you have in store for the rest of the year?**

As far as painting goes, I want to keep learning and experimenting in my art studio, mostly landscapes on both canvas and furniture. Also, I want to continue to work at my sister Patty's store Paint Passion in Red



Bank, New Jersey and do furniture commission work along with my sisters.

♥ **Where do you source your vintage furniture?**

Years ago I would go to furniture auctions regularly. These days, I mainly go to garage and estate sales. I also enjoy hunting in thrift and antique stores.

For more details visit
www.facebook.com/artbyKarenDonnelly



Cherish
YESTERDAY
Dream of
TOMORROW
live for
TODAY



Stone effect floral frame



All it takes is a Sizzix® Big Shot™ Plus machine, floral dies and a little imagination to transform a plain wooden photo frame. Create a faux stone effect with fabulous floral highlights to perfectly frame a saying or photo.

By Sizzix (www.sizzix.co.uk)

MATERIALS

- ☐ Black and white chalk paint
- ☐ Old picture frame
- ☐ Card
- ☐ Suitable stamp and assorted Distress Inks

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Sizzix® Big Shot™ Plus Machine (660020)
- ☐ Sizzix® Bigz™ Die - Tattered Florals by Tim Holtz® (656640)
- ☐ Sizzix® Bigz™ Die - Tattered Leaves by Tim Holtz® (656927)
- ☐ Paintbrush
- ☐ Toothbrush
- ☐ Hot glue gun
- ☐ Tweezers

♥ **STEP ONE** Scrunch up your card and flatten it out. Die-cut at least three of each flower, with the exception of the daisy, from medium weight card, plus four of the standard leaves and one oak leaf.

♥ **STEP TWO** Cut the large flower into individual petals before taking the first petal and twisting it into a cone using a pair of straight tweezers. Secure with a hot glue gun. Curl back the petal edges with the same tweezers. This will form the centre of your large rose.

♥ **STEP THREE** Curl back the edges of each petal and add them one at a time to surround the centre, until you have the size of rose that you desire. At this point, you may want to use scissors to snip away the base to help the bloom sit on the frame more securely.

♥ **STEP FOUR** Repeat the process to create a couple of small and a medium flower.

♥ **STEP FIVE** Scrunch up the die-cut leaves and fold each one at the base to create a little realistic dimension, securing in place with a tiny staple.

♥ **STEP SIX** Mix a medium grey colour from the black and white paint and cover the frame, before painting the blooms and leaves.

♥ **STEP SEVEN** Take a paintbrush and dip the bristles into the grey paint. Apply the paint to the frame and leaves using a splatter effect, created by flicking back the bristles.

♥ **STEP EIGHT** Once the base coat is dry, take a tiny blob of white chalk paint and use a dry brush technique to gently apply to the frame, concentrating on the edges and over the splattered texture. Use the same technique on the edges of the petals and leaves.

♥ **STEP NINE** Attach the individual flowers and leaves as shown, using a hot glue gun.

♥ **STEP TEN** Mix up some very dark grey paint to a milky consistency and use a toothbrush to create a random splatter effect all over the assembled frame to further enhance the faux stone effect.

Find more inspiration and project ideas #sizzixplus or visit www.sizzix.co.uk

TOP TIP

You can use the same technique to achieve the look of an aged metal frame, by substituting the ink colours. For a copper frame effect you can spray a copper base and age it with a blue-green patina.



WINE-BOX OTTOMAN

Make a multifunctional piece that can be used as both a footstool and a handy storage device – plus it looks good too.

By Chloe Edwards (www.madeanew.co.uk)



THE DESIGN MEANS THE OTTOMAN CAN BE MADE WITH WINE BOXES OR APPLE CRATES, AND THE FABRIC CAN BE ANYTHING AT ALL.

WINE-BOX OTTOMAN HOW TO...

MATERIALS

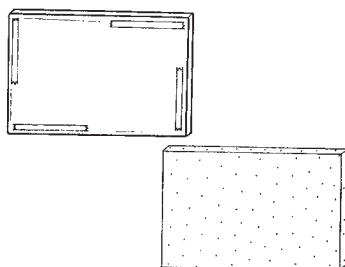
- ❑ **Wooden wine box/crate, 12-bottle size**
- ❑ **Wood wax**
- ❑ **9mm wooden lid, cut to fit your box**
- ❑ **50mm double-sided tape**
- ❑ **25mm medium-density upholstery foam, cut to fit your lid**
- ❑ **Cotton wadding (batting), the length of your lid plus 20cm**
- ❑ **Thick fabric to upholster the lid, the size of the lid plus an extra 10cm all around**
- ❑ **Contrasting lighter-weight fabric for the underside of the lid, about 5cm smaller all around (enough to cover the stapled fabric)**
- ❑ **2mm card, slightly smaller than the lighter fabric**
- ❑ **2 small brass hinges**
- ❑ **Screws shorter than the thickness of your box (use snips to cut off any excess, if needed)**
- ❑ **30cm chandelier chain or cotton webbing, cut into two equal lengths**
- ❑ **8 upholstery tacks (brass or silver)**

EQUIPMENT

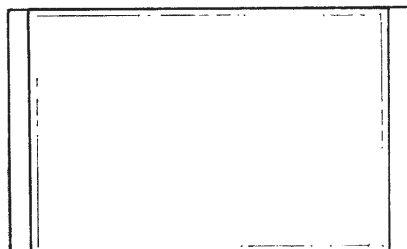
- ❑ **Medium sandpaper**
- ❑ **Staple gun**
- ❑ **Drill with small bit**
- ❑ **Hammer**

♥ **STEP ONE** Sand any rough edges on the box and treat the wood with wax inside and out, following the manufacturer's instructions. Try to avoid waxing the top edge where the lid will sit, as this may mark your fabric. Give this edge a light sanding after waxing to make sure it is clean.

♥ **STEP TWO** Lightly sand the edges and corners of your wooden lid. Apply a few strips of double-sided tape to one side of the lid, then stick the foam neatly on top. The tape will hold it in place during upholstering.

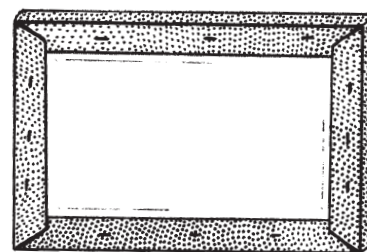


♥ **STEP THREE** Lay the cotton wadding on a flat surface. Position the lid on top, foam side down, so that there is an extra 10cm of wadding at each end. Fold the overlapping wadding ends over and staple them to the wooden side of the lid. Start by stapling the centre of one side, then pull the wadding taut and staple it at the centre of the opposite side. Continue moving out equally on either side until all is stapled. This will give a firm, smooth finish to your lightly cushioned lid.

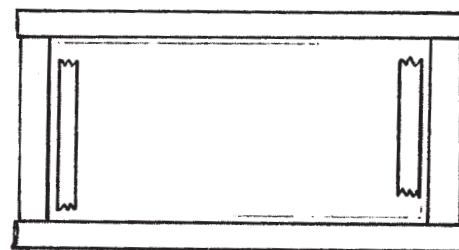


♥ **STEP FOUR** Iron the thick fabric. Lay it on a flat surface, wrong side up. Place the wood/foam/batting sandwich centrally on top of the fabric, leaving an equal excess of material on all sides.

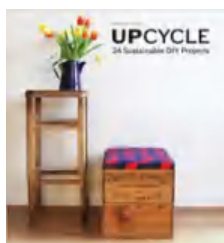
♥ **STEP FIVE** Repeat the stapling process as described in step 3, working from the centre outwards, but rather than stapling to the ends, leave about a 7cm gap on each side to allow for folding the fabric inside. Pull the fabric taut, making sure any patterns or lines are centred and straight. Tuck the excess material in neatly at each end (on the short side), making sure the fabric is taut before stapling to secure.



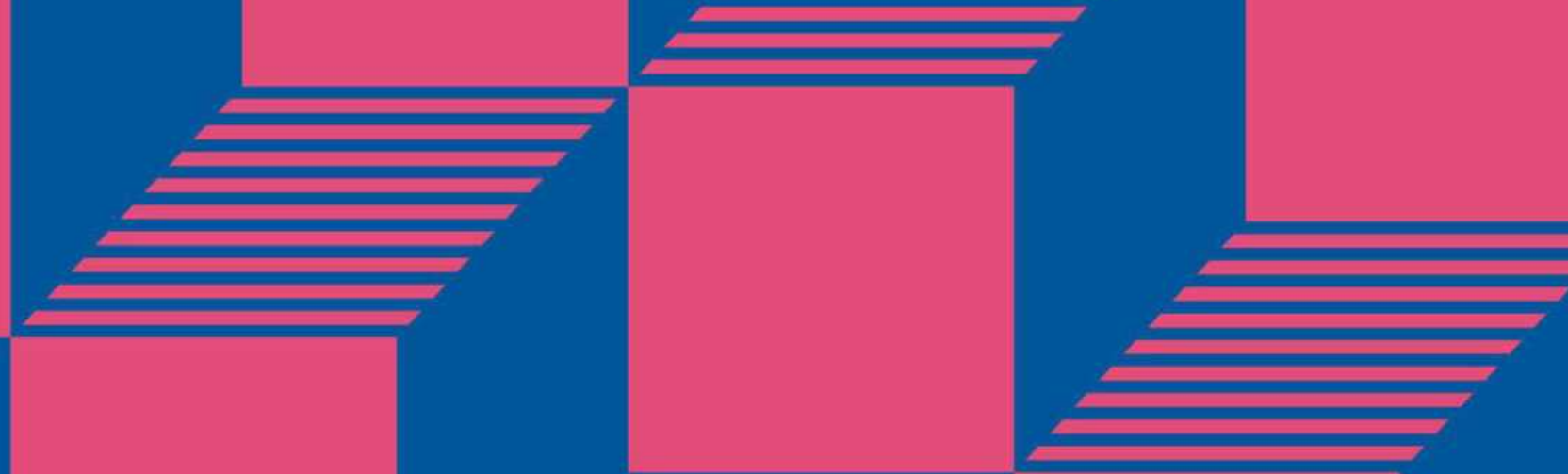
♥ **STEP SIX** Prepare the inner lid cover. Iron the lighter-weight fabric. Place the thick card in the centre with an equal excess of fabric all round. Stick double-sided tape along each edge of the card, then neatly wrap the fabric edges over to secure, starting with the opposite long edges, then the shorter edges, tucking in the corners again. The front side of the card should be covered by smooth fabric. Set aside.



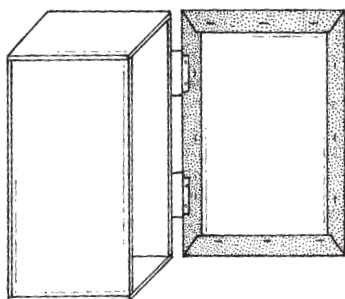
♥ **STEP SEVEN** Decide which of the long sides of the box is the front. On the opposite side, make a pencil mark 10cm in from each end. Hold a hinge in place on the top edge of the box against this measurement and make circular marks through the screw holes. Repeat at the other end and drill 2mm holes through the marks. Screw on the hinges, making sure they open outwards.



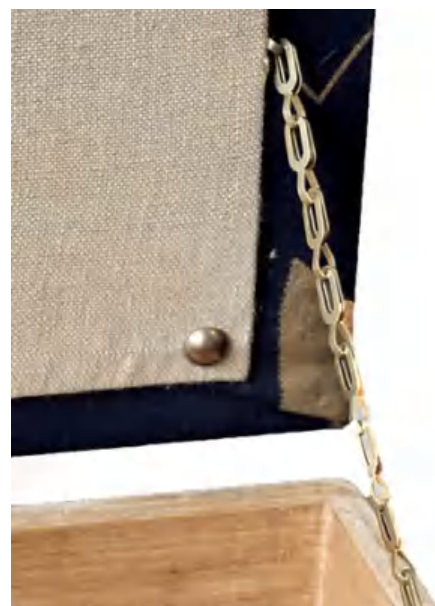
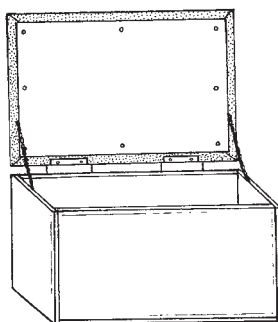
This project is featured in *Upcycle: 24 Sustainable DIY Projects* by Rebecca Proctor, published by Laurence King. **RRP £18.95**



♥ **STEP EIGHT** Place the box on its side on a flat surface with the hinges at the bottom. Now place the lid, fabric side down, in position to attach it to the hinges. You may need to put a couple of books or magazines under the box to bring it to the same level as the lid. To ensure the lid is fitted centrally, line it up against the box and mark the position of the hinges. Slide the lid back a little until it is aligned with the flat part of the hinge and mark the position of the holes.

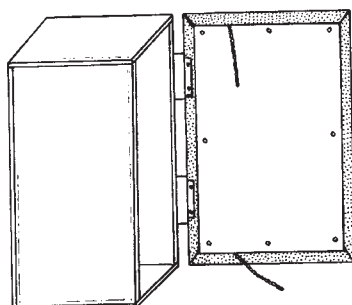


♥ **STEP ELEVEN** To secure the other end of the chain, sit the box the right way up and hold the lid open far enough back that it will not fall shut. Pull the chain taut, creating an equal-sided triangle between chain, box and lid, then mark the position of the chain inside the box, 2cm in from the edge. Drill a pilot hole, then fix the end of the chain with a screw. Repeat on the other side.



♥ **STEP NINE** Keeping the box on its side, position the inner lid cover, noting where it needs to sit to cover the stapled areas. Drill a pilot hole, then screw one end of the chain to the wooden inner lid about 8cm in from the hinged edge and 2cm in from the short side edge. Repeat on the other side.

♥ **STEP TEN** Reinsert the inner lid cover, covering the screws and any area not upholstered. Secure the cover with upholstery tacks, tapping them in with a hammer, placing one at each corner and one at the centre of each edge.





PALLET WINDOW SHELF

Wood is a precious commodity that's wasted on a grand scale, so rescue a pallet from the waste heap and make yourself a handy window shelf.

By Christopher Berry (www.factorytwentyone.co.uk)



THIS SIMPLE PROJECT USES JUST A FEW BASIC TOOLS, BUT IT'S WORTH LINING UP THE HOLES NEATLY TO GET A QUALITY FINISH.

PALLET WINDOW SHELF HOW TO...

MATERIALS

- ☐ Wooden pallet
- ☐ Strong string or cord

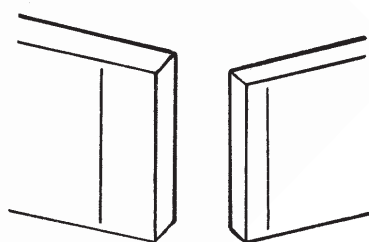
EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Crowbar
- ☐ Hammer
- ☐ Large flat-head screwdriver
- ☐ Saw
- ☐ Pliers
- ☐ Plane and vice (optional)
- ☐ Drill

♥ **STEP ONE** Find a wooden pallet in good condition. Consider the width of the boards – wide will make a deep shelf and thin a narrow shelf. Now break the pallet apart. This is often quite difficult and calls for a determined approach, using a crowbar, hammer and large screwdriver to prise it apart. Alternatively, saw the boards if you don't mind losing a bit of length. Once dismantled, remove the nails using pliers or the claw end of the hammer.

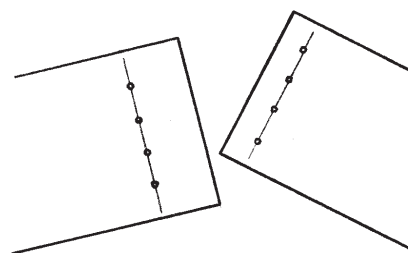
♥ **STEP TWO** Decide on the size of your window shelf, then measure and cut the boards to their required length with the saw. If you are after a rustic look, leave the edges as they are. If you'd prefer the window shelf to have a new and modern look, plane the edges smooth, clamping the boards in a vice or work bench.

♥ **STEP THREE** Test fit the window frame together to check the size and ensure all the measurements are correct. Make any necessary adjustments. Lay the boards out to form a neat L-shape, where the end of one plank butts up against the side of the next. Now draw a line on the inside of the corner, so one plank has a marked area equal to the thickness of the other plank. On the other plank, draw a line across the end, 1cm in from the edge.

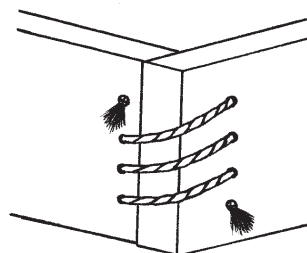


♥ **STEP FOUR** Lay the planks flat, end to end, with the marked ends against each other. Draw four or five small lines between the marks running parallel to the length of the boards. These marks will indicate where to drill holes for string to run through. Repeat this for the other three corners of the shelf.

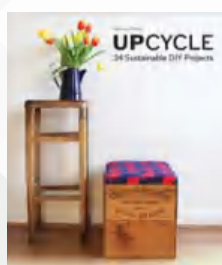
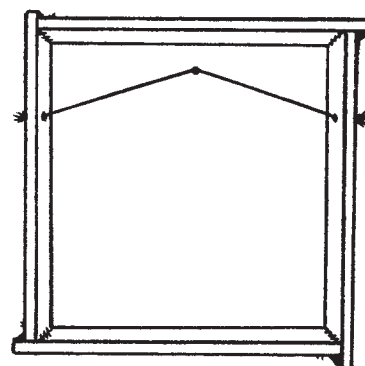
♥ **STEP FIVE** Choose a drill bit large enough to make a hole that the string can pass through easily. Drill through all the boards at the points where the parallel lines meet the other marks.



♥ **STEP SIX** Feed the string through the holes, pulling the boards neatly together. Repeat this at the other corners. Just like lacing up a shoe, it is possible to use different types of stitching as you desire.



♥ **STEP SEVEN** Drill a hole in the side of each frame near the top and back of the uprights. Thread another piece of string through these holes and tie a knot at each end. It is now ready to be hung and displayed.



This project is featured in *Upcycle: 24 Sustainable DIY Projects* by Rebecca Proctor, published by Laurence King. RRP £18.95

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♥ **Here** Hester's
homemade four-
poster bed.

♥ **Top left** Shed
painted to look like
a beach hut.

♥ **Bottom left**
Make this
kitchen island
on page 110.



MY vintage HOME

The beach house

Faced with a rundown rental property, Hester
not only transformed it into a seaside haven,
but she transformed her life too.

By Hester van Overbeek

MY vintage HOME

Hester is a craft writer and video maker, on her website she posts a new, easy to follow, craft video every Thursday. She also, of course, writes for *Reloved*, as you'll have noticed from her tutorials over the last year. This year marks the start of an even bigger project for Hester, her first DIY book *Furniture Hacks*. The book has 35 projects you can make from materials and furniture you probably already have lying around the house, upcycled and frugal! Hester also still works as a hair and makeup artist on photo shoots in the UK and around the world.

Hester lives with her boyfriend Ian and Kermit the Jack Russell dog, in the seaside town of Broadstairs.

"Due to my work as a hair and makeup artist I get to go to a lot of different places, one of them being location houses – interesting houses that are great for photo shoots or film. After having to drive four hours to go to a particular beach house that I didn't find very interesting, I thought I can do this better! Set up a great house, decorate it in a seaside theme and rent it out for shoots. I started looking for a house bigger than our current one and with great natural light. When one across the street from us came up for rent, we packed up and moved in.

"The house was an absolute mess. The previous owner never did any upkeep and we did a deal with the landlord that I would fix the interior for a little rent deduction.

"When I first entered the empty house, I must say I just wanted to curl up in a little ball and cry – there was so much work to be done! But, I'm not one to sit still, so I gave

myself a four week deadline to do the whole house up. Some friends of ours who only come down to our seaside town on the weekend were amazed by the progress we made.

"The first thing we did was rip some of the very dirty carpets out, lay down a new laminate floor in the dining room, paint the floorboards in the bedroom white and paint every single wall, as they were so dirty.

"Originally I wasn't allowed to change anything in the kitchen, but the landlord was so impressed with what I created that they gave me permission to give the kitchen a beach look as well.

"After all the painting came the decorating part. As we lived in a two-bed before and the new house was a five-bed,

I'VE ALWAYS loved the look OF SCANDINAVIAN BEACH HOUSES

there was a lot of new furniture to get. My budget was super low, so I decided to make most of my new pieces and change some of my old bits to fit in with the new nautical design theme. I've always loved the look of Scandinavian-style beach houses – white with hints of blue and lots of natural wood – so this became the new style of the house.

"I changed the look of our bed, made curtains out of old pieces of cotton my aunt had left over after a fair, dip dyeing the plain white cotton to give it a bit of colour. I found mismatched chairs in local secondhand furniture shops, turned old wood into shelves and got a little beach hut style shed for the garden.

"Even though the house is a semi-detached Edwardian property the nautical style really fits in. It did help that the landlord had already done some modernisation and even installed a white pebbled gas fireplace, just like the rocks you find on the beach here.

"My friends and family got inspired by our new place and started to DIY themselves, painting walls and making furniture. That got me thinking, maybe I should show other people you don't need a lot of money and skills to make your own pieces for your home.

"When a photographer friend came over to check the beaches around

♥ **Here** Dining room table reclaimed for just a tenner.

♥ **Below left** Beautiful board painting.

♥ **Below right** Hester's crafty work room.

♥ **Far right** The living room bookcase.

our house for a photo shoot he said, 'you know what, even if the house doesn't work as a location house, you still have something amazing to show other people. You should start a blog to showcase how you have made your own furniture.' And I thought, yes, why not? A week later Hester's Handmade Home was born and I have been making craft video tutorials ever since. The website has now even turned into a book, so exciting! A lot of the builds I initially made for the house are now in the book for you to make as well.

"My favourite upcycle of the whole house must be the four-poster bed (tutorial in the book). When we moved house I wanted a more nautical looking bed to fit in with the theme of the house. The bed we had was still in good shape, so replacing it would have been an unnecessary cost. I kept thinking there must be a way to turn our old bed into something more beachy and the idea for a four-poster bed was born.

"My whole thought process normally starts with getting inspired by magazines and Pinterest, then I start making drawings until I have something I like the look of. As the bed is such a big build I had my technical drawing approved by my dad, an amazing DIYer himself, and I was off to the lumber yard to buy wood. It sounds impressive, building your own four-poster bed, but I will let you in on a little secret, it's pretty easy! I also included shelving above and behind the headboard. This meant I didn't need side tables any more, creating more space in the bedroom. The shelf is great for showcasing artwork, ornaments or flowers, and there is plenty of space for lighting. Behind the headboard is a shelf that holds books, tablets and magazines, tucked out of sight. It kickstarted my whole furniture hack career and is still my most popular video on my YouTube channel.

"I also love the quick fix I did in the kitchen, changing the door handles from



♥ Here Caption.

A LOT OF THE BUILDS I INITIALLY made for the house ARE NOW IN THE BOOK for you to make as well

generic metal to pieces of driftwood. It transformed the kitchen from something that didn't really fit the rest of the house, to completing the beach feel of the property.

"Then there is the dining room table. Initially I wanted to build my own table, using old scaffolding boards. When we went to a reclamation yard to find some I saw a school trestle table leaning against the counter. The wood was beautifully worn with paint splatters, handwriting and drilled holes all over it. The shop owner kept saying the underneath of the table was beautiful

unspoiled wood, but I was more interested in the way it was, scribbles and all. For a tanner the table was mine. I fixed the table legs so that it's a little more stable and painted the underneath white for a fresh look. The table top got a light sanding, but I made sure the mathematical formulas and paint drops stayed visible. The table is quite narrow, but long, so perfect for entertaining friends. You don't sit too far apart from each other, so conversation is always flowing. The table top is also my favourite backdrop when filming or photographing my tutorials – the colour and

texture make everything look amazing. You will also see this wood a lot when you go to my Instagram page.

"Another build I loved making is the bookcase in the living room, another project that made the book. By making different squares and rectangles and stacking them together, you can make a modular bookcase that, besides holding books, is great for showcasing trinkets. There was an awkward space left behind our sofa, so I built a narrow console table out of old wood, which is great for showcasing pieces on. Depending on the season, it has a big collection of sailing boats, reindeer or flowers on it. Another thing I change with the seasons is our curtains – heavy beige and green ones for the winter and thin, flowing white ones for the summer. It only takes 5 minutes to change, but the whole feel of the room is different. The sofa cover also gets changed about for a fresh

MY vintage HOME

look. I have a set of brown textured covers and fresh bright blue cotton ones. At the moment the brown covers are still on – I like how the bright cushions really stand out on them, but I may change to the bright blue covers again soon. On the wall is another cheap make – I bent wire into the words ‘sun, sea and seagulls’, spray painted it blue and attached it to the wall. It costs you a few pennies and a spare hour and you have a one of a kind artwork.

“I love reading magazines, it’s where I get much of my inspiration, so by a little reading nook I hung a magazine rack. Here I keep my new magazines close to hand, easy to grab for a 10 minute coffee break in the garden.

“My guest room is being called the splinter room by my friends, not because you will get injured when you sleep there, but because everything in there is made out of wood! It’s my mini log cabin in my otherwise nautical home. I love the modern rustic look and, as the rest of the house is bright and white, I gave myself this one room to go all cosy and woodland on. The bed surround is a project you will find in the book and, combined with a night stand made out of a stack of trunks and old suitcases, window shutters and some sheepskin, this room just screams log cabin.

“When the sun is out I like to spend most of my time outdoors, and I love having people over for barbecues, so I definitely needed some outdoor entertaining space. We have a small back garden that has another one of my projects in, the corner bench made out of old decking boards. It’s so comfy with its bright coloured cushions and a little awning that provides enough shade on a hot summer day – I almost feel like I’m in the Mediterranean. We also have a side garden where our shed is painted to look like a beach hut. This courtyard is the perfect little sun trap to have a cup of coffee in early in the morning.

“Of course, I can’t just sit around all day soaking up the sun. If I really need to concentrate on work I go to my office, which is the opposite of the calm, tranquil environment of the nautical dining room – it’s busy and there is colour everywhere. The walls are full of inspirational pictures and drawings, and of course all my craft materials are stored there. I have had the same bookcase since I first moved to the UK more than 10 years ago. I’ve used it in more than five houses, but it has now had a little makeover and turned into a sideboard – great for storing all my craft books, yarn, sewing machine and documents. On top there is plenty of space for stacks of magazines, all my washi tapes and little trinkets.

“Most of the objects I upcycled were

♥ Here Inspired by coastal living.

♥ Below left Deck bench and awning in the garden.

♥ Below right Iconic designs in the guest bedroom.



pieces I had around the house, furniture I had for a while that was in need of a little update. Small extra pieces I found on eBay. I love spending hours on that site just browsing. I also like going to our local reclamation yards and secondhand shops – there are some amazing ones in the Thanet area. My top tip would be RG Scotts in Margate, that place is a true Aladdin’s cave of furniture and ornaments. Whenever I needed something for the house, or book, I headed to this wonderful place, never to come back empty handed.

“I’ve been making things since I was a small child. We were always sat around the kitchen table drawing, painting or making little dolls out of felt. When I was a bit older, my dad showed me how to do DIY and woodwork, a skill that came in very handy doing up the house.

“I’m a firm believer that if you have an idea, go for it! Make your own pieces and if it doesn’t work, then take it apart and start over again. If you haven’t made anything in your life, start small, use a great tutorial, always measure twice and just start making. Paint a cupboard, attach some new door handles or build your own table – anything is possible. Every DIY subject has a video on YouTube so if you get stuck just have a little browse online to see how somebody else has done it.

“Our house has a Scandinavian nautical feel to it, but my style is ever-changing. Lately I’ve been adding way more colour to our interior, my favourites being bright yellow and green. I’m curious what the house will look like in a year’s time!”

To see more visit www.hesterhandmadehome.com or on Instagram see [instagram.com/byhestergrams](https://www.instagram.com/byhestergrams)

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KITCHEN ISLAND

Kitchen islands are expensive, so why not make your own from an old cabinet or chest of drawers and an old sign?

By Hester van Overbeek

I ADDED A SPLASH OF CITRUS PAINT TO THE SIDES OF THE DRAWERS AND GAVE THE INSIDE SHELF A COAT OF PEACOCK BLUE.

KITCHEN ISLAND HOW TO...

MATERIALS

- ☐ Old cabinet or chest of drawers
- ☐ Quick-drying filler
- ☐ Paint
- ☐ Worktop (see step 7 for details and dimensions)
- ☐ Two wooden brackets
- ☐ Screws
- ☐ Drawer handles or, as used here, boat cleats
- ☐ Nuts and bolts to attach handles
- ☐ Clear varnish
- ☐ 4 caster wheels
- ☐ Very strong glue, such as No More Nails

EQUIPMENT

- ☐ Screwdriver
- ☐ Saw
- ☐ Filler knife
- ☐ Sandpaper
- ☐ Paintbrush
- ☐ Drill

PREPARING THE ISLAND

♥ **STEP ONE** Find a suitable cabinet or chest of drawers – ideally you want it to have some shelves and drawers. Remove any cabinet doors by unscrewing the hinges and take out the drawers if it has them. Remove any drawer handles or knobs.

♥ **STEP TWO** Remove the legs from the cabinet. They might be screwed, nailed or glued on, so unscrew, saw, or pull the legs off, but be careful not to damage the cabinet.



♥ **STEP THREE** Fill all the holes left by the hinges, knobs and screws with quick-drying filler. When it has dried, smooth the filler down with sandpaper.

PAINTING THE ISLAND

♥ **STEP FOUR** Give your cabinet a base coat of paint, including the inside. There is no need to paint the top as this will be covered by the new worktop.

♥ **STEP FIVE** For a fun accent, paint the sides of the drawers a different colour. I chose lime and yellow. These colours aren't on view all the time, so they are not in your face, but they do give a little pop whenever you open the drawers.



♥ **STEP SIX** Give your cabinet its second and maybe third coat of paint, allowing the coats to dry between each application. My cabinet was made from a very dark wood, so it needed three coats of paint.

♥ **STEP SEVEN** The new worktop needs to be at least 20cm wider and 25cm longer than the top of your cabinet. This can be an old wooden sign like mine (from a local junkyard), a piece of butcher's block, a thick sheet of MDF or a leftover piece of kitchen worktop. Apply very strong glue to the top of the cabinet and place the worktop on top. Position the worktop so that the 20cm of extra width overhangs at the front of the cabinet.

TOP TIP

An offcut piece of butcher's block would look great on top of the island too. Have a look in your local kitchen store or wood supplier. Gumtree or eBay are also good places to find reasonably priced wood offcuts, as you can always find people selling leftover bits of kitchen builds there. Can't find any reclaimed wood you like? Use a thick sheet of MDF painted your favourite colour instead. If using MDF for your worktop, paint it with an all-in-one paint to avoid having to prime it first.



ADDING THE WORKTOP

♥ **STEP EIGHT** Weigh down the worktop evenly (I used piles of heavy books and magazines) to help the glue set.



♥ **STEP NINE** To help support the worktop, I added wooden brackets under the overhang. As my cabinet has a little ledge on top, I had to cut out a square of wood. Measure the depth and height of the ledge and use a saw to create this notch in the bracket. If you are lucky, your cabinet won't have this and you can skip this step.

♥ **STEP TEN** Attach your brackets under the overhang of the worktop using the glue. Also screw them in from inside the cabinet. Give the underside of the worktop and the brackets a lick of paint.



FINISHING TOUCHES

♥ **STEP ELEVEN** For the drawer handles, I wanted my island to have a slight industrial feel, so I opted for steel boat cleats, but you could also choose ceramic knobs or metal bars. Drill a hole in your drawer and select a bolt long enough to go through your handle and the drawer. Secure in place with a nut inside the drawer.



♥ **STEP TWELVE** Give your worktop a coat of clear varnish. This will make the work surface easier to clean and, if you opted for the MDF top, this will make the paint last longer. My wooden sign was slightly weathered, so I gave it four coats of varnish, letting it dry completely between coats.

♥ **STEP THIRTEEN** Attach caster wheels to the bottom of the island. Mine are 10cm high and the metal matches the drawer handles. Make sure the wheels you choose can carry the weight of the island plus all the stuff you will store in it.

This project is taken from *Furniture Hacks* by Hester van Overbeek, photography by James Gardiner, published by CICO Books. **RRP £14.99**





AN UPCYCLED LIFE... *making memories*

Jane Clempner believed in fairytales until life made her face harsh reality, but now she's writing her own happy ending and sharing her passion for beautiful vintage things...

My business started less than a year ago, but it was actually decades in the making, and has changed me as person in ways so exciting that I sometimes think I will burst.

I grew up believing in fairytales. This served me well for 30 years or so, surviving on the assumption that being pretty and good was all I needed for a happy ending. Then I found myself alone, with three children under five and reality struck.

The problem with princesses is that they don't actually do much, they just wait for a hero to arrive. Sadly it took more years of waiting and hoping to realise this wasn't going to happen. But the wonderful thing about life is that there's always time to change and the worst of times can be the very thing you need to grow. Ironically, I'm starting to believe in happy endings again, but now it's me writing the script, as I become my own heroine.

It started, if I'm honest, because I needed to generate income. My freelance writing was too sporadic and my part-time editorial job didn't cover my bills. People had always complimented me on my style and eye for design, which I had laughed off as them being kind. I knew I had a lifelong passion for all things vintage and French, dating back to my university days. All I needed to do was put these things together.

Easier said than done though. The problem with being a former-princess is that I didn't have much self-belief. I had made a good job of bringing up my children, but starting a business was quite another matter, requiring skills I just didn't think I had.

What I did have was passion. Buried deep, but strong nonetheless. I knew I simply loved old things: French things, vintage shoes, pretty jugs, painted furniture, rusty metal and old watering cans. I loved rummaging in charity shops for things with potential. I loved bidding at auctions when no

one else did on something ugly, which I could transform with a coat or two of paint and a little imagination. But was that enough?

Just because I find delight in mellow pine and '40s handbags, is that a basis on which to start a business? I know that I've loved vintage clothes since I first found my own style. As a student I wore old silk dresses and everyone thought I was weird. In my 20s I ran away to France and spent liberating years absorbing French landscapes, architecture and style – I wanted to be a poet. I became a writer instead, using words to pay the bills and escaping into them privately to stay sane.

One of my earliest memories is going to church jumble sales with my grandma Edith. She would give me a handful of coins and set me free. The rooms seemed vast, the stalls at just the right height to lure me with the musty array of goodies on offer. I recall feeling grown-up and skipping home to share our finds. Fast forward 40 years and you'll find me at a vintage fair, an auction viewing or a flea market, rummaging with the same sense of excitement.

My now grown-up children encouraged me, so I took the first step and thought of a name! Giving something an identity makes it more real. This was the easy part – it would be dedicated to and named after my lovely and inspirational grandparents, Arthur and Edith New. And I think they would be pleased.

I tentatively started a Wordpress blog. Not that I expected anyone to read it. I just sat at my computer and put down how I felt and what I was doing, sprinkled with a few pictures of my vintage 'finds'. I didn't really think about where it was going or how it might develop.

But far, far away in the distance

was My Dream. It was this: to take my vintage car back to France and drive down sun-drenched, Cypress-lined roads, stopping off at village brocantes and returning with piles of scrumptious treasure to fill my 'boutique' where lovely people would come to share the irresistible fruits of my passion. Uniting beauty-seekers with rarities – re-homing vintage finds where they could be enjoyed. Making new stories to be re-told.

I began to realise I was doing more than just setting up shop. It was about rediscovering who I was: the student in her silk dress, the child with her handful of coins, the dreamer in Paris, the poet, the writer, the small girl with the wobbly fringe cut by her granddad, whom she loved so much and who would one day inspire her to grow and be the person she was meant to be.

Share in Jane's dreams at arthurandede.wordpress.com and www.etsy.com/uk/shop/ArthurandEde





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